This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

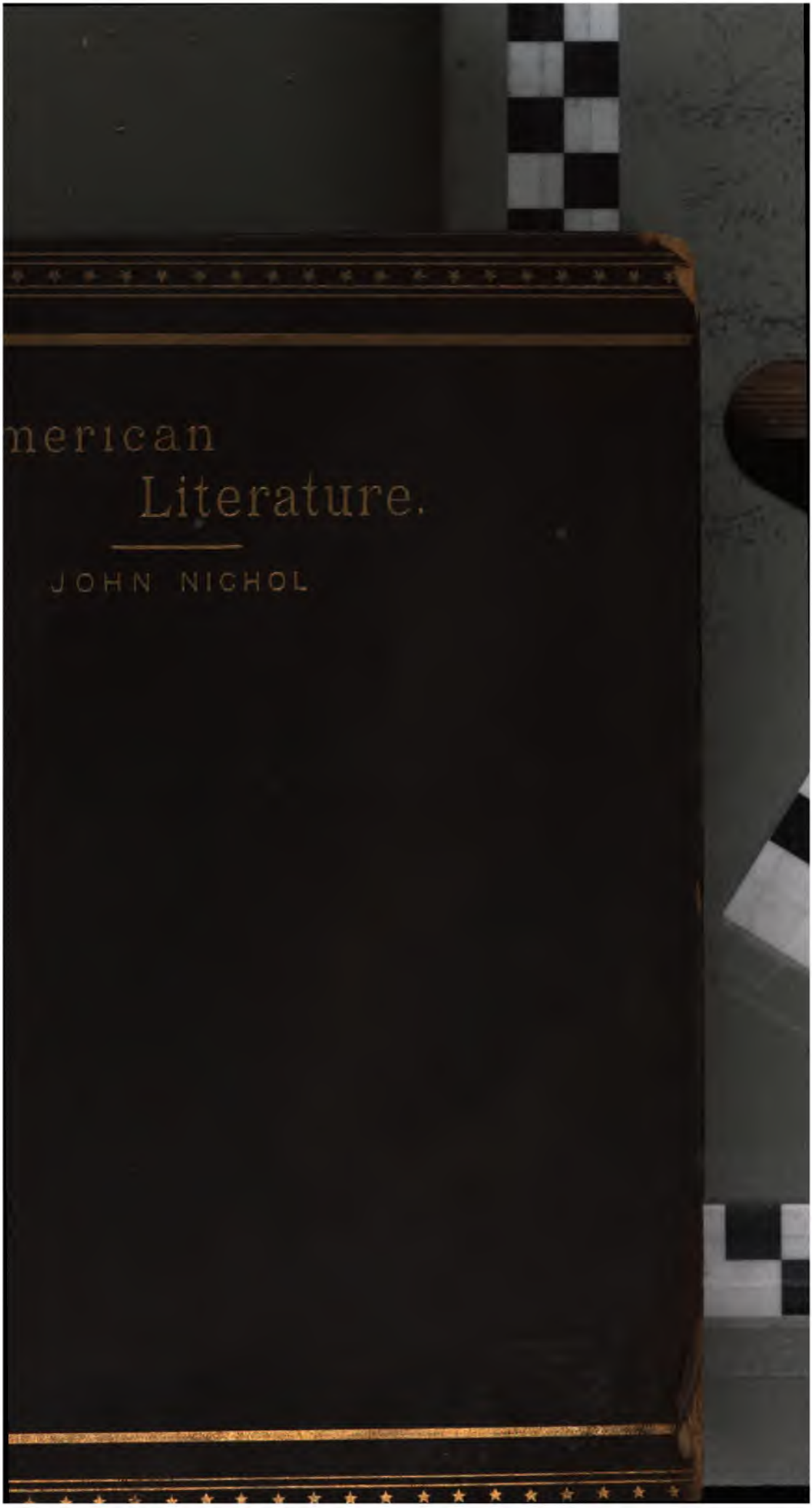
+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`


merican
Literature.
JOHN NICHOL

6/.

AMERICAN LITERATURE

By the same Author.

HANNIBAL: An Historical Drama. Glasgow: Maclehose, 1873. Fcap. 8vo. 6s. 6d.

THEMISTOCLES AND OTHER POEMS. Glasgow: Maclehose, 1881. Fcap. 8vo. 6s. 6d.

TABLES OF EUROPEAN LITERATURE AND HISTORY, A.D. 200-1876. Glasgow: Maclehose. 4to. 6s. 6d.

TABLES OF ANCIENT LITERATURE AND HISTORY. Glasgow: Maclehose. 4to. 4s. 6d.

ENGLISH COMPOSITION PRIMER. London: Macmillan. 18mo. 1s.

BYRON ("English Men of Letters"). London: Macmillan. Fcap. 8vo. 2s. 6d.

BURNS: A Summary of his Life, Character, and Genius. Edinburgh: Paterson. 8vo. 3s. 6d.

AMERICAN LITERATURE

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH

1620—1880

BY

JOHN NICHOL, LL.D.

PROFESSOR OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF GLASGOW

EDINBURGH

ADAM AND CHARLES BLACK

1882

SJK

All rights reserved.

PS 92
N5

"Much ill-natured criticism has been directed on American manners. I do not think it is to be resented. Rather, if we are wise, we should listen and mend. Our critics will then be our best friends, though they did not mean it."—EMERSON.

PREFACE.

THE preparation of this volume has extended over a number of years, beginning with the spring of 1861, when the subject of American Poetry formed the last of a course of lectures delivered to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution; its design dates from a visit paid to the States, then in the first flush of their reunion, in the autumn of 1865. Shortly after my return, I contributed to the "North British Review" two articles, the substance of the chapters on Lowell and Emerson, with the aim of continuing the series: but while I was engaged on a paper on Hawthorne, circumstances led to a postponement of the project. I was encouraged to resume it by the reception of the outline of "American Literature" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1875), which forms the basis of this book. In 1879 I gave a course of six lectures on the subject at Cheltenham; and, last year, in Edinburgh, other two on the Novelists. It was my intention to have published these lectures much as they were delivered: but, on examination, so many additions—relating to the earlier periods on the one hand, to recent poets and novelists on the other—seemed requisite that, with the exception of three chapters, I have recast the

whole book. It now claims to convey a fair general impression—derived from all sources within the author's reach—of Literature in the United States, from the establishment of the first English settlements on the North American Continent till near the present time. The, still, limited compass of the work prevents its making any pretence to completeness : it disclaims assuming to be a catalogue even of all the writers who, in their own country, have, on various grounds, attained importance. It has been my wish rather to discuss, in some detail, the authors who most conspicuously represent the main periods or departments of their nation's artistic activity;[1] to illustrate their position, by reference to the history and politics of the time ; and to give my views, founded in those cases on direct personal study, of their position and influence. It will perhaps be conceded that if a distant critic suffers by greater risks of omission or error, there is some compensating advantage in his being removed from the suspicion of the partialities of friendship, or their reverse. Minor authors, whose aggregate works it would be the task and waste of a life to attempt to master, I have been content to judge by extracts, and the collation of the verdicts of independent reviewers who have devoted to one or more of these a special attention. By notes and references, I have been careful to avow my principal obligations in this direction; but I must add a further acknowledgment of my debts to Mr. Griswold and Mr. Curtis, to Duyckinck's *Cyclopædia;* above all to the two recent volumes by Professor Coit Tyler of Michigan, without the free use of which the chapter on the Colonial Period could not have been written. I must also refer to the assistance which,

[1] The reader is warned not to look for even a general estimate of the numerous scientific and scholastic works of this and the previous century.

in the historical portion of the work, I have derived from the materials accumulated by my father, Professor J. P. Nichol (during and after his visit to the States in 1848), in preparation for a philosophical review of American politics and society, unhappily interrupted by his death in 1859. Finally, in the spirit of the motto prefixed to these pages, I shall be only grateful for corrections or suggestions, whether to omit or to add, that—friendly or otherwise—may proceed from any well-informed source.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

Circumstances of American Literature. Conditions of Settlement. Influences of Geography; History; Climate; Government Pages 1-28

CHAPTER II.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

Life of the early Colonists. Virginian Adventure. New England Theology: Education: Superstitions: Persecution. Roger Williams. A Church-State: The Mathers. Jonathan Edwards. Puritan rhymes 29-60

CHAPTER III.

PERIOD OF THE REVOLUTION.

Benjamin Franklin. Effects of War and Controversy on Literature. Declaration of Independence. The Constitution—Hamilton and Jefferson: Madison. Orators: Patrick Henry; Otis; Fisher Ames. Theologians: Woolman; Mather Byles. Poets of the period: Trumbull; Dwight; Freneau. Popular Ballads of the War 61-96

CHAPTER IV.

AMERICAN POLITICS AND ORATORY.

War of 1812. Rearrangement of Parties—Democrats and Republicans. Extension of the Union. Tariffs. Jackson and Corruption. Calhoun; Clay; Webster. Orations:—Everett. Free Theology: Channing. Parker; Follen; Recent Controversy: Slavery; Garrison; Phillips; Sumner . . Pages 97-142

CHAPTER V.

HISTORY.—ROMANCE AND CRITICISM, 1800-1850.

History: Bancroft; Hildreth; Prescott; Motley. Early American Romance: Brockden Brown; Washington Irving; Cooper; Edgar A. Poe. Books of Travel—Sketches—Criticism:—Quincy Adams on Shakespeare. Science and Philology:—Audubon; Agasssiz; Marsh, etc. 143-186

CHAPTER VI.

REPRESENTATIVE POETS.

Bryant—Longfellow—Edgar A. Poe—Walt Whitman—Joaquin Miller 187-219

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL AND MINOR POETRY.

Lowell—Whittier—Holmes. Minor Poets: Pierpont; Percival Drake; Halleck; Willis. Female Poets . . 220-253

CHAPTER VIII.

THE TRANSCENDENTAL MOVEMENT.

"The Dial"—Alcott—Margaret Fuller—Emerson's Philosophy and Ethics 254-286

CHAPTER IX.

EMERSON AND THOREAU.

Emerson compared with Carlyle. Politics: Poetry: Later Essays. His followers—Henry D. Thoreau . . Pages 287-321

CHAPTER X.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Quietism in Literature. Biography: Minor Tales. "The Scarlet Letter"; "The House of the Seven Gables"; "The Blithedale Romance"; "The Marble Faun"; "The Old Home" 322-352

CHAPTER XI.

AMERICAN NOVELISTS, 1850-1880.

Novel-writing. Adventure and Description. Speculation and Psychology:—Judd; Holmes. Political romances:—Mrs. Beecher Stowe. Stories for Children. School of Hawthorne:—Theodore Winthrop; Julian Hawthorne; Aldrich. Recent Analytical School:—Henry James; W. D. Howells . . 353-401

CHAPTER XII.

AMERICAN HUMORISTS.

Characteristics of American Humour. New England Satirists:—Holmes—Lowell—"Artemus Ward." Buffoonery: "Mark Twain;" "Josh Billings," etc. Bad effects of this style in England and America. Nationalities:—Leland. Influences of the Pacific: Pioneer pictures:—Bret Harte. General Characteristics and prospects of American Literature . . . 402-448

ADDENDUM. RECENT AMERICAN CRITICS.

NOTE A. . . . The Constitution.
„ B. . . . The Presidential Election.
„ C. . . . Corruption and "Democracy."
„ D. . . . Pro-Slavery Sympathy.
„ E. . . . Emerson and Darwin.
„ F. . . . Practical Religion.
„ G. . . . The Triumph of Buffoonery.

INDEX . . . . . Pages 468-472

AMERICAN LITERATURE.

CHAPTER I.

GENERAL SURVEY — CONDITIONS AND CHARACTERISTICS.

"WHO are your Poets?" demanded, with some touch of scorn, an English critic of an American lady. "Among others," she replied, "we have Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Milton." The retort is open to a charge not often preferred against her countrymen, — it is over modest. "Vixere fortes *post* Agamemnona": there are poets now[1] living in America whose claim to respect it is a mere, though a common, affectation to deny. But, by way of apology for the prejudice that provoked the question, let me quote from a Chicago newspaper the following advertisement:—"Mr. Elias F. Mathers offers to write a thousand magazine articles in a thousand weeks. Length is immaterial." "So, probably," subjoins the London *Examiner*, "is quality." Unhappily, Mr. Mathers is no rare phenomenon, for perhaps a thousand of his Transatlantic compatriots are ready and, in a sense, able to perform the same feat. Far too many books and magazines are yearly published in Great Britain — books that fail from the obviousness of their platitudes, the slovenliness of their

[1] 1880, when some sentences were added to this Chapter, first delivered as a Lecture in 1866.

style, the innate incapacity of their writers; or, worse, owe a short success, and opportunity to cumber the ground, to their more or less skilful setting of commonplaces, their appeals to complacent ignorance or perverted taste. In the United States the same evil is magnified, and it requires some hardihood, from a distance, to arraign it.

The critics of one nation must, to a certain extent, regard the works of another from an outside point of view. Few are able to divest themselves wholly of the influence of local standards. This is pre-eminently the case when the efforts of a comparatively young country are submitted to the judgments of an older country, strong in its prescriptive rights, and intolerant of changes, the drift of which it is unable or unwilling to appreciate. Our censors are apt to bear down on the writers of the New World with a sort of aristocratic hauteur. Englishmen are perpetually reminding Americans of their immaturity, scolding their innovations in one breath, their imitations in another, and twitting them with disregard of the "golden mean." Such sentences as the following, where half-truths are clad in discourtesy, cannot fail to excite an unpleasant feeling. "Over American[1] society there is diffused an incurable vulgarity of speech, sentiment, and language, hard to define, but perceptible in every word and gesture." "Persons of refinement in the States are over-refined: they talk like books, and everywhere obtrude their superior education." Americans, on the other hand, are, for the most part, impossible to please. Ordinary men among them are as sensitive to foreign, and above all to British, censure as the "irritabile genus" of other lands. Their second and third rate authors, reared in the atmosphere of "Mutual Admiration Societies," of which we have, nearer home, equally obnoxious equivalents, resent the application of a higher standard with more than the vehemence due to a

[1] *National Review*, October 1861, p. 371.

personal affront. Mr. Emerson is allowed to impress home truths on his countrymen, as, "Your American eagle is very well, but beware of the American peacock." Such remarks are not permitted to Englishmen. If they point to any flaws in Transatlantic manners or ways of thinking with an effort after politeness, it is "the good-natured cynicism of well-to-do age:" if they commend Transatlantic institutions or achievements, it is, according to Mr. Lowell, "with that pleasant European air of indirect self-compliment in condescending to be pleased by American merit which we find so conciliating." This incisive writer and often genial humorist is, as Defensor Patriæ,[1] apt to criticise our leading thinkers and poets in a spirit of retaliation. Mr. Carlyle is a "cynic" given to "canting," who, "since *Sartor Resartus* has done little but repeat himself with increasing emphasis and heightened shrillness," who "goes about with his Diogenes dark-lantern, professing to seek a man, but inwardly resolved to find a monkey." In a depreciative review of *Atalanta in Calydon*, the same critic has "well-grounded doubts whether England is precisely the country from which we have a right to expect that most precious of gifts (poetry) just now." Elsewhere, after a bitter reminder that Alabamas are not mere bad wishes, he addresses us in mass with a half-truth, though with some characteristic confusion of metaphor, "Dear old long-estranged mother-in-law, it is a great many years since we parted. Since 1660, when you married again, you have been a stepmother to us. Put on your spectacles, dear madam. Yes, we *have* grown, and changed likewise. You would not let us darken your doors if you could help it; we know that perfectly well. But pray, when we look to be treated as men, don't shake that rattle in our faces, nor talk baby to us any longer." Now that the United States have

[1] In a later Chapter I have endeavoured to do justice to Mr. Lowell (now indubitably the foremost living American author) in this and other capacities.

attained their majority, it is indeed time that England should cease to assume the attitude of their guardian; but it is also time that they should cease to be on the alert to resent the assumption. Meanwhile, "qui s'excuse s'accuse" continues to have its application across the sea, where in matters of Art, if no longer in Politics, a nervous self-assertion remains to indicate a lingering self-distrust. He who attempts to give, as the result of long and careful study, a sympathetic sketch of American Literature, must be prepared to suffer rebuke for patronising the writers he has praised, and the reproach of ignorance for omitting to mention those he has inwardly condemned.

"There are ten thousand——
Geese, villain?
Authors, sir,"

is Byron's appropriate adaptation of "Macbeth." We must "prick our face and over-red our fear." I, however, disclaim in these chapters attempting a catalogue or playing the part of an auctioneer. I am content to illustrate, mainly from the works of a few representative artists in prose and verse, the general impressions derived from some direct knowledge of a great people, and some familiarity with the recorded thoughts and fancies that seem most conspicuously to display the leading features of their character.

It has become a platitude to say that the developments of History and of Literature run in parallel lines; but much of our education consists in the unfolding of universally acknowledged principles which, when applied to various times and places, often lead to previously unexpected results. Only he who has realised the stagnant solemnity of the East can read the Vedas: the impulse of the Athenian Drama was due to Marathon and Salamis as much as to the elder Myths: half the soul of Plato's political philosophy was in the laws of Sparta, the other half in the oratory of Pericles.

The Augustan age of Latin Literature was the product of a period of repose, inspired in part by the spirit of the foregone Republic, in part by that of the Empire newly crowned. The Mediæval Church, the English Commonwealth, the reign of Scepticism in France, and the tempest of ideas which marked the closing years of the eighteenth century in Germany, are embalmed in Dante, Milton, Voltaire, and Goethe. In Spain the traditional Cid and the pathetic Quixote represent the palmy days and the decline of Chivalry. Two great nations of the modern world remain without an adequate literary expression of their political power. The one, long struggling into historical prominence, has its intellectual life still benumbed by the frosts of northern despotism: the other is even yet a giant in swaddling-clothes; it has just begun to have a past, and belongs mainly to the future. What the reading of History is to the past, Travel is in some measure to the present: it enables us by our own eyes and ears to refute misrepresentations, sometimes to resolve perplexities; but we must not expect too much from it. "Patriæ quis exsul." "Cœlum non animum." We can only gather interest on the capital we take with us. "He that would bring home the wealth of the Indies must carry out the wealth of the Indies." Many English men and women who run abroad, a show to others, themselves see nothing. If we go to Chicago or Hong-Kong only to sell dry goods, we come back to Bristol or Birmingham with a dry-goods' return. Emerson keeps repeating with a half-truth and a shade of conceit, "I can find Greece, Asia, Italy, Spain, and the Islands,—the principle of each and of all eras in my own mind;" and one of his pupils quotes from Beowulf, "Far countries he can safest visit who is himself doughty." Dr. Johnson and Kant obeyed the precept, "Let a man first travel round the *terra incognita* inside his own threshold." But we know the value of the verdicts of the former on far

countries and men. The latter more wisely confined himself to criticise the region he had explored, and few important changes have been made on his map of it.

We are not bound to make ourselves familiar with other lands, but unless we have some degree of acquaintance with them we had better not pronounce sentence on them. Even with a view to the British interests, of which we hear so much, it is not always safe to treat a great country after the manner of the reviewer who never read a book on which he was about to decide, lest it should prejudice his judgment. There are some cases, indeed, in which imagination and hearsay may be made to supply the place of knowledge. Mere sights can be brought home, and old records lit up by fancy to revive old events; but some experience is required to realise the conditions under which, starting from a point, a race has in two centuries spread over a continent, within whose arena, as on a vast theatre, different phases of civilisation are contending.

The two nations of the civilised world who have most in common are the two whose acquaintance with each other is, in many respects, the most imperfect. Their separate political history is included within a century; when they write of each other it is already to draw contrasts like those drawn by Herodotus between the manners of the Greeks and the Egyptians. "Fathers and mothers in America," writes Mr. Trollope, "seem to obey their sons and daughters naturally, and as they grow old become the slaves of their grandchildren." "An Englishman," writes Mr. Emerson, "walks in a pouring rain, swinging his closed umbrella like a walking-stick, wears a wig, or a shawl, or a saddle, or stands upon his head, and no remark is made." Religion in America, asserts Mr. Trollope, is characterised by a certain rowdiness. Religion in England, declares Mr. Emerson, is torpid and slavish. Both authors confirm, by their example, the state-

ment that "it is hard to write about any country so as not to represent it in a more or less ridiculous point of view;" and yet both are candid and able beyond the majority of critics. The relationship existing between Englishmen and Americans makes them ignorant of their mutual ignorance. They are near enough to set great store by each other's judgments, and not near enough to form just judgments extemporaneously. Their jealousies are those of competitors: their disputes the χαλεποὶ πόλεμοι ἀδελφῶν. Their community of speech is itself too often a medium of offence, for it dispenses with a study in the course of which they learn something of the habits and social histories of France, Germany, Italy, and Spain. One has, indeed, heard of Americans in England being complimented on the rapid progress they had made in the language. This mistake hardly occurs every day; but it is rivalled by popular fallacies almost as patently absurd; *e.g.*, during the war it was in some quarters a European belief that the Northern States were contending with the mongrel Spaniards of South America, and that raids of Pawnee Indians from Ohio were apprehended in the Broadway of New York, a city lying, according to one of our members of Parliament, on "the Potŏmac." It was somewhere reported that Mr. Lincoln, whom it was then the fashion to revile, had ordered guillotines from Paris to establish a reign of terror; and Mr. Tupper is said to have remonstrated against the enormity by a letter to the President. Another savant visiting Boston took up a volume of Webster's *Lexicon* with the remark, "He was a wonderful man to find time in the midst of his great political career to write that dictionary; but what a sad end he had!"[1] An older parallel is Byron's anecdote of the Englishman in Venice who asked the American Consul if it was true that Washington had been killed

[1] Tres juncti in uno—Daniel Webster, Noah Webster, and Webster the chemist, hanged for the murder of Dr. Parkman.

by Burke in a duel. Throughout the Civil War it was currently held in London that half of the Union armies was made up of foreign mercenaries, that the North were fighting for empire, the South for freedom, and that the slave-holders would prove invincible. Their advocate, Mr. Spence, persuaded the people of Glasgow, that Andrew Jackson and Jefferson Davis were the most disinterested of American presidents. All these and worse confusions, as that between pioneer life and the society of Boston or New York, are the result of reports so hasty that it has been said, "If their writers were accused of having committed crime in the 'States,' the production of their volumes would prove an *alibi*."

The facility of travel, which makes it easy to acquire first impressions, is itself a temptation to superficial people. The ambition of the ordinary British tourist in the States is satisfied when he has seen Niagara, called at the White House, and been introduced to the *literati* of Boston, to whom he afterwards refers with an exceptional complacency. "English travellers," says Washington Irving, with a gentle satire, whose edge has hardly been blunted by fifty years, "are the best and the worst in the world. . . . Their travels are more honest and accurate the more remote the country described. I would place implicit confidence in an Englishman's description of the regions beyond the cataracts of the Nile, of unknown islands in the Yellow Sea, of the interior of India, or of any other tract which other travellers might be apt to picture out with the illusions of their fancies; but I would cautiously receive his account of his immediate neighbours, and of those nations with which he is in habits of the most frequent intercourse. However I might be disposed to trust his probity, I dare not trust his prejudices." "Mutato nomine de te" is our sole retort. Readers of books on the other side of the Atlantic—of books, that is, by their own countrymen

—have been made more familiar with Rome, Venice, and Dresden, than with London or Liverpool. Half a century ago Christopher North is reported to have said, "We have no good book about America." The only English work of genius on the subject remains the masterpiece of caricature of the prince of caricaturists. But the reverse holds equally. The Americans have no good book about England. The statesmen and philosophic jurists, whose minds are best qualified by nature and training to grapple with the problems on either side, to indicate the dangers and unfold the secrets of the greatness of either nation, have had their energies concentrated on the patriotic measures of their own land, or consumed in its party strifes. The task they have pretermitted has consequently fallen into the hands of superficial observers and talkers, or been taken up by others more competent from isolated points of view, and hurried over with fatal haste. Mrs. B. Stowe's good-humour is as shallow as Mrs. Trollope's acerbity: of her *Sunny Memories* we remember nothing but an abortive attempt to describe the Atlantic, the hackneyed *Melrose by Moonlight*, and the writer's self-gratulations on the open doors of aristocratic philanthropists—the most famous of whom had she never met it would have been well for both, for the wildly-misplaced confidences of the one, and the rash ambition of the other, led to the foulest blot on the fair page of our literature. Similarly, Mr. N. P. Willis, running across the sea, returns with jottings from the conversation in the saloons of "the charming Countess of B——:" his *Pencillings by the Way* has no more relation to an adequate account of the countries visited than the sketches in a school-girl's portfolio to an authorised geological chart. Washington Irving was a "spirit of another sort." Half a European by residence, he liked our country, and, having opportunity to study it, made himself familiar with our manners; but his purpose did not lead him to abstract

inquiry or analysis, and he confined himself mainly to pleasant literary and local reminiscences.

The least satisfactory works of the two foremost American prose writers of recent years are those connected with their English experiences. Every chapter of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Old Home* exhibits his delicate grace and quiet subtle thought. He carried with him across the Atlantic a series of picturesque photographs of English cities, old and new, of bright young Leamington and rusty Warwick, of Lichfield market-place, of Norfolk Boston with its minster bell, of Blenheim Park and Alloway Kirk, of Greenwich Hospital, with its Trafalgar memories—many a vivid glimpse of squalid poverty and superabounding wealth; but his retiring nature sought out dim alleys and woodland ways, or loitered within the shadow of gray cathedrals, and his book, as a whole, says little of England as a whole. The mass of our well-to-do citizens will never forgive him for calling them "bulbous" and their wives "portly;" while impartial critics are constrained to accept his own sentence on himself—a sentence in which the unhistoric spirit of the artist is conspicuous. "Jotting down the little acrimonies of the moment in my Journal, and transferring them thence (when they happened to be tolerably well expressed) to these pages, it is very possible I may have said things which a profound observer of national character would hesitate to sanction." Seven years earlier Emerson's *English Traits* was published, and in spite of much that is true and telling in its keen and polished epigrams, it showed how deceptive the impressions derived from a brief sojourn in our country are apt to be. Mr. Emerson had not buried himself in watering-places and old towns; he had gone to our great cities and visited our great men, but he frequently caricatured them, not always in the best taste. The following characteristic passage illustrates at once the exaggeration which plays so large a part in all American wit,

and the extent to which we bear on our own backs, as seen by strangers, the vices which we find most conspicuously stamped on theirs: "The English feel themselves at liberty to assume the most extraordinary tone on the subject of English merits. An English lady on the Rhine hearing a German speaking of her party as foreigners, exclaimed, 'No, we are not foreigners, we are English; it is you that are foreigners.' They tell you daily in London the story of the Frenchman and Englishman who quarrelled. Both were unwilling to fight, but their companions put them up to it. At last it was agreed that they should fight alone in the dark, and with pistols. The candles were put out, and the Englishman, to make sure not to hit anybody, fired up the chimney, and brought down the Frenchman." If this[1] was told daily to Mr. Emerson in London, what reliance can be placed on what was told daily to Mr. Dickens in New York? The former continues of the English, "They have no curiosity about foreigners, and answer any information you may volunteer with, 'Oh, oh,' until the informant makes up his mind that they shall die in their ignorance for any help he will offer. There are really no limits to this conceit, though brighter men among them make painful efforts to be candid. The habit of brag runs through all classes, from the *Times* newspaper through politicians and poets, through Wordsworth, Carlyle, Mill, and Sydney Smith, down to the boys of Eton."

The intrusion of Mr. Mill's name into this list is sufficiently absurd, but it would be well if the majority of our lively sketches of American society were inspired by even as fair a spirit, or if the task of writing them had always fallen into the hands of men as accomplished, or, on the whole, as candid as either of the above-named authors. To this day

[1] It occurs as a jest in the *Table Talk* of Samuel Rogers, who adds, "Whenever I tell this story in Paris, I make *the Frenchman* fire up the chimney."

the only attempt to give a philosophical account of American civilisation by a writer on our side of the Atlantic is the work of the illustrious De Tocqueville; and the changes of fifty years, in a country where events follow each other like the shifting scenes of a stage, call for a revisal even of his carefully-considered estimates. Professor J. E. Cairnes's excellent work on *The Slave Power* is avowedly limited in its range. Mr. Trollope's interesting volumes, though generally accurate, are rather those of a tourist than a student. The *New America* of Mr. Hepworth Dixon, though undoubtedly the most suggestive of that writer's works, deals professedly with the outskirts and anomalies of Transatlantic life. Untravelled Englishmen know much less of America as a whole—less of her geography, her history, her constitution, and of the lives of her great men—than Americans know of England. Of the mistakes on both sides—ludicrous and grave—we have the larger share. Distance, no doubt, magnifies in their eyes the importance of our Chartist, Fenian, and similar demonstrations; but they have never so misconceived a British statesman as we misconceived Mr. Lincoln, or gone so far astray in regard to any crisis of our history, as we did in reference to the moving springs, and the results of a war "worthy a Milton to defend and a Lucan to sing." The source of this greater ignorance lies not so much in greater indifference as in greater difficulty. England is one, compact and comparatively stable. The United States are many, vast, various, and in perpetual motion. An old country is a study, but a new country is a problem. It is hard to realise the past, but it is harder to read the present: to predict the future is impossible. Props to memory are more common and more secure than "aids to reflection." Antiquity is brought to our firesides in the classics, till Athens and Rome "to us are nothing novel, nothing strange." We are more familiar with the Acropolis than the western Capitol, with Mount Soracte than the

Catskill Hills, with Pisistratus than with Jefferson Davis, Tiberius Gracchus than William Lloyd Garrison. Our scholars know more about Babylon than about Chicago. Dante immortalises for us the Middle Age; Plantagenet England is revived in Chaucer; the inner life of Modern England has a voice in Tennyson and the Brownings. Where is the poet who will reveal to us "the secrets of a land" in some respects indeed like our own, but separated in others by differences which the distance of 3000 miles of ocean only half represents; which, starting on another basis, has developed itself with energies hitherto unknown, in directions hitherto unimagined? Who will become the interpreter of a race that has in two centuries dispersed itself over a continent, whose resources are scarcely more than half discovered, and which has to absorb within itself and harmonise the discordant elements and lawless spirits of other races for whom the resources of the old world are more than half exhausted? *Caret vate sacro*—but it does not want poetical aspirations as well as practical daring.

> "This land o' ourn I tell ye 's gut to be
> A better country than man ever see.
> I feel my sperit swellin' with a cry
> Thet seems to say, 'Break forth an' prophesy.'
> O strange New World, thet yet wast never young,
> Whose youth from thee by gripin' need was wrung!
> Brown foundlin' o' the woods, whose baby-bed
> Was prowled round by the Injun's cracklin' tread,
> An' who grew'st strong thru' shifts an' wants an' pains,
> Nursed by stern men with empires in their brains!"

Mr. Anthony Trollope has said that "in no part of its (*sic*) national career have the United States been so successful as in that of literature." But most critics will make bold to reverse his judgment. The number of writers in the States is vast. Their press, in times of peace, pours forth a mass of prose and verse that flows in full stream to Lethe. Mr. Griswold informs us that he has in his own library more

than seven hundred volumes of native novels and tales: his list of "remarkable men" is, in extent, like Homer's catalogue of ships. Every village, says one of their satirists, has its miniature copy of Milton, or Byron, or Shelley—

> "A whole flock of Lambs, any number of Tennysons—
> In short, if a man has the luck to have any sons,
> We may feel pretty certain that one out of twain
> Will be some very great person over again."

America has given birth to more than a fair proportion of eminent theologians, jurists, economists, and naturalists; but, with the exception of Russia, no great modern country has, in the same number of years, produced fewer works, of general interest, likely to become classical; and Bishop Berkeley's sanguine prophecy of another golden age of arts in the happier Empire of the West still awaits fulfilment. This fact, attributable in part to obvious historical causes, is fully recognised by the leading authors of the New World. "I hate to hear people talking of American literature," one of these recently remarked: "I find here no want of ability, but we have not had time to have a literature." The same authority has written, "It is the country of the future. From Washington,—proverbially the city of magnificent distances,—through all its cities, states, and territories, it is a country of beginnings, of projects, of designs, of expectations." The conditions under which the communities of the New World were established, and the terms on which they have hitherto existed, have been unfavourable to art. The religious and commercial enthusiasms of the first adventurers on her shores, supplying themes to the romancers of a later age, were themselves antagonistic to romance. The spirit which tore down the aisles of St. Regulus, and was afterwards revived in England in a reaction against music, painting, and poetry, the Pilgrim Fathers bore with them in the Mayflower, and planted across the seas. The life of the early colonists left

no leisure for refinement. They had to conquer nature before admiring it; they had to feed and clothe, before analysing, themselves. The cares of existence beset them, to the exclusion of its embellishments. While Dryden, Pope, and Addison were polishing stanzas and adding grace to English prose, they were felling trees, navigating rivers, and fertilising valleys. We had time amid our wars to form new measures, to balance canons of criticism, to discuss systems of philosophy; with them

> "The need that pressed sorest
> Was to vanquish the seasons, the ocean, the forest."

The struggle for independence, absorbing the whole energies of the nation, developed military genius, statesmanship, and oratory, but was hostile to what is called polite literature. The people of the United States have had to act their Iliad, and they have not had time to sing it. They have had to place together the *disjecta membra* of all races, sects, and parties in a παντοπώλιον πολιτειῶν. Their genius is an unwedded Vulcan melting down all the elements of civilisation in a gigantic furnace, and welding them anew together. An enlightened people in a new land, "where almost every one has facilities elsewhere unknown for making his fortune," it is not to be wondered at that the pursuit of wealth has been their leading impulse; nor is it perhaps to be regretted that much of their originality has been expended upon inventing machines instead of manufacturing verses, or that their religion itself has taken a practical turn. One of their own authors confesses that the "common New England life is still a lean, impoverished life in distinction from a rich and suggestive one;" but it is there, almost alone, that the speculative and artistic tendencies of recent years have found room and occasion for development. Our travellers find a peculiar charm in the manly force and rough

adventurous spirit of the far West; but the poetry of the pioneer is unconscious. The moving incident is not his trade.[1]

The culture of the South, on the charms of which visitors of the upper class from England are wont to dwell, has been limited in extent if not in degree: it has been the comparatively rare hothouse fruit of wealth and leisure in a select society—a society whose prestige has been heightened by an outer circle of semi-barbarism. The civilisation of the States has diffused itself from two centres—the Puritan colony of the north-east, and the Old Dominion. The settlers in the former started with the idea of political freedom, which their descendants have maintained, and the idea of maintaining one form of superstition by the persecution of others, which their descendants have been educated or constrained to abandon. The imported republicanism of our commonwealth endures: its stern theocracy has proved an exotic, and withered away. Not an unbending Calvinism, but a practical, self-relying, industrial spirit was destined to mould the thoughts of the cultivators of Ohio and the quellers of the wilderness. The South has taken another course, and its formulæ, remaining hard, have had to be broken in battle. In the Revolution days Virginia was the nurse of statesmen; and down to our own, her chosen sons have fought their way to the front in all the great national councils, and played in them for good and ill a powerful part. They will continue to hold a good place in history, by their resistance to the excessive centralising tendencies and mere commercial selfishness of the northern Plutocracy. One of the most philosophic political judgments of recent times admits, that "the honour of maintaining self-government, and making it possible for the Federation to dominate over the Continent, cannot be wrested from the Southern States."[2] But the same im-

[1] Since the above was written, Mr. Bret Harte and Joaquin Miller have done something to idealise the life referred to.

[2] From unpublished notes on America, by the late Professor J. P. Nichol.

partial spectator, in the same pages, prophesies the then impending struggle—a struggle made inevitable by the fact that, in the clash of rival interests and conflicting social principles, a fanaticism on both sides in politics is developed, only less fierce than that of rival religions; that when the strife thickens, the hottest, not the clearest, heads lead the masses. Compromises based on a mutual forbearance may be the preludes to gradual reform; compromises effected by concessions to force, as "Free California" on one side, the "Fugitive Slave Law" on the other, are patched and hollow truces, such as paved the way for the rowdy wrestle for Kansas, the challenge to the flag at Fort Sumter, and its salvation by cannon at Gettysburg. The rival forces had been moving in opposite directions towards the past and towards the future, and tugging at the rope at opposite ends till it had to break, or one or other antagonist be drawn over the border line. As the heirs of the men who burned the witches and scourged the quakers, we had Winthrop and Hawthorne: the heirs of Washington and Jefferson were Calhoun—as accomplished, but as hopeless, a reactionist as Julian, and President Davis—almost as distinct a traitor as Catiline.

It has been pleaded for Athenian slavery that it made possible the culture of the whole free populace which led them to throng to listen to the "Antigone." If this were so, in view of the buffooneries that are the delights of a London or New York pit, we should have to arm all our moral sense to rejoice at the change. But the example of the West spares us the anachronistic regret: American slavery has done nothing but harm to the "mean whites" of Baltimore or Charlestown. If the literature of the North has been hitherto inferior to that of most European countries, the Southern States have produced scarcely any literature at all. In the world of letters they have shone by reflected

light. In this respect it is hardly an exaggeration to say that it is mainly owing to their connection with the North that the Carolinas have been saved from degenerating to the level of Mexico and the Antilles. Within this century, not half a dozen writers (if we except the mere orators) whose names are widely known have been born south of Mason and Dixon's line. Those of Calhoun, Maury, Simms, and Edgar Allan Poe (a Marylander accidentally born in Boston), are a meagre offset to those of Prescott, Motley, Bancroft, Webster, Everett, Lowell, Bryant, Emerson, Sumner, Dana, Holmes, and Hawthorne, belonging to the single state of Massachusetts. Whether we look to India or Louisiana, it would seem as if the fire of a tropical sun had taken the poetic fire out of Anglo-Saxon veins. The indolence which is the natural concomitant of despotism has the same benumbing effect. Like the Spartan marshalling his Helots, the planter, lounging among his slaves, was made dead to art by a paralysing sense of his own superiority. Some thirty years ago, a scheme to establish a new Southern University was abandoned because the "cuticular aristocracy" would not associate with the teachers. It has been the common practice of the rich estate-holders to send their sons to be educated in the northern schools, the best of which it is impossible to overpraise.

Almost all genuine Transatlantic literature is inspired by the spirit of hope and confidence in labour—the spirit of the workman who feels himself adequately equipped for an unfettered competition; of the farmer who stands erect on his own acres, overshadowed by no "superior," "where the tongue is free and the hand;" of the adventurer who fears the desert or the swamp as little as he dreads Mather's witches or the goblins of Scandinavia. For its best vitality and aspirations, its scant performance and large promise, we must turn to New England. Its defects and merits are those of the

national character as developed in the Northern States, and we must seek for explanation of its peculiarities in the physical circumstances that environ and the moral conditions that pervade them.

When we remember that the Romans lived under the sky of Italy, that the character of the modern Swiss is like that of the modern Dutch, we shall be on our guard against attributing too much to the influences of external Nature. Another race than the Anglo-Saxon would doubtless have made another America, but we cannot avoid the belief that the climate and soil of America have had something to do in moulding the Anglo-Saxon race, in making its features approximate to those of the Red Indian, and stamping it with a new character. An electric atmosphere, and a temperature ranging at some seasons from 50° to 100° in twenty-four hours, have contributed largely to engender that restlessness which is so conspicuous a trait of the people. A territory which seems boundless as the ocean has been a material agent in fostering an ambition unbridled by traditionary restraints. When European poets and essayists write of Nature, it is to contrast her permanence with the mutability of human life. We talk of the everlasting hills, the perennial fountains, the ever-recurring seasons. "Damna tamen celeres reparant cœlestia lunæ—*nos ubi decidimus*," as Sir Walter Raleigh translates it, "Our leaf once fallen springeth no more." In the same spirit Byron contemplates the sea, and Tennyson a running stream. In America, on the other hand, it is the extent of Nature that is ever present to the mind—the infinity of space rather than the infinity of time is opposed to the restricted, rather than to the transient, existence of man. Nothing strikes a traveller in that country so much as this feature of magnitude. The rivers, lakes, forests, plains, and valleys—Niagara itself, with its world of waters—owe their magnificence to their size; and, by a transference

not unnatural, although fallacious, the Americans generally have modelled their ideas of art after the same standard. Their wars, their hotels, their language, are pitched on the huge scale of their distances. Compared with Europeans, they have gained in surface what they have lost in age.

> "That untravelled world, whose margin fades
> For ever and for ever when they move,"

is all their own, and they have the hopes of a continent to set against the memories of a thousand years. Where Englishmen recall, Americans anticipate. In thought and action they are constantly rushing into empty spaces. New York "Central Park," and the largest streets, in the plan of Washington, are on the outer verges of these cities. Emigration is the normal condition of a great part of the inhabitants. When the backwoodsman's fields in Iowa begin to look less wild, he crosses the Missouri. We have heard of a North Virginian farmer complaining that he had neighbours within fifty miles, and preparing to move away from the encroachment.

> "I'm crowded just to think that folks are nigh,
> And can't bear nothing closer than the sky."

The domestic attachments of the people are intense: they generally spoil their children; but it is rare, save in country farms, to find a family mansion rooted to the same town or district. "Jonathan," says Mr. Lowell, "is one drop of a fluid mass who knows where his home is to-day, but can make no guess of where it may be to-morrow." The tie which unites one generation with another is easily broken, and this want of continuity in life breeds a want of continuity in ideas. The American mind, in which fitfulness and pertinacity are strangely mixed, delights in speculative and practical, social and political experiments, as Shakerism, Mormonism, Pantagamy; and the very tenacity with which

the majority of Americans cling to their written constitution is due, in part, to the acknowledged want of other anchorages. Within this fence everything is allowed: European idealism and materialism are, each in turn, exaggerated by writers, who—from Emerson to Walt Whitman—have tried to glorify every mode of human life, from the ascetic to the semi-brutish. The habit of instability is fostered by the rapid vicissitudes of commerce and the melting of one class into another, by which all landmarks but that of a temporary public opinion are drifted away. The great fault of the people is impatience: they will not stop to verify and study details, and satisfy themselves with generalisations, which are superficially conclusive rather than "suggestive or rich." The mass of them have never learnt that "raw haste" is "half-sister to delay;" that whatever is worth doing at all is worth doing well; that "work done least rapidly art most cherishes." Our agriculturists tell us that the Americans traverse their best land like locusts, leaving heaps of stones behind them. Solid Scotch engineers inform us that a shaft which takes six weeks to turn on the banks of the Clyde is thrown out from the yards of New York in a fortnight; that the boats on the Mississippi are built of papier-mache, and the summer-houses of veneer. This is not quite so; but there is a grain of truth in the satire. A Hudson or Mississippi steamer is stocked with luxuries unknown on the Thames, the Clyde, or the Mersey: a line of rails, sometimes of painted wood, is laid over 1500 miles with marvellous speed; but insurance companies demur to take the lives of the passengers. The makeshifts which were at first a necessity with the northern settlers have grown into a custom: they adopt ten half-measures instead of one whole one, and, beginning with a bravery like that of the opening bars of "Lohengrin" or the preambles to their codes, they end sometimes in the sublime, sometimes in the ridiculous.

The changes constantly passing over those codes are a series of indices of the direction in which American Republicanism is proceeding and the rate at which it moves. Of the thirteen original States of 1787 only two have preserved the form of their original constitutions; and ten date from 1830; that of New York from 1846: and it has been remarked that some of their modifications "have already stamped with legality principles subversive of all previous opinions on the conduct of Government." Of these the election by popular assemblies of judges, for a fixed term of years, without a retiring allowance at their close, has been of very questionable advantage. The official patronage reposed in the hands of the President, investing him with the wholesale dismissal and appointment of every subordinate functionary of State, be he Consul, Comptroller of Customs, or village Postmaster, has proved itself an unquestionable evil.[1]

The same haste and habit of swift transition has a noxious effect on a literature where the shallow omniscience and superficial wit, now threatening to demoralise our own, is intensified in parody. To weigh the merits of any great question or man requires thought and leisure, to pour ridicule or laudation on either is easy; consequently American, even more than English judgments, lean to the one or the other extreme. The satirists of the West are apt to play the part of clowns—the disciples of idolators. Nothing in history or romance is safe from Mark Twain; no seclusion of quiet life from the carnival of oratory held over the coffins of the poets. In England, democratised as it is, a week elapses before our magazines teem with "the personal recollections" of the lion-hunters who have been once graced with a scowl from Carlyle or a smile from Longfellow. Reviewing, with few exceptions, in both hemispheres is a pretext for the obtrusion of the critic's own crochets or person; but "interviewing" is a

[1] See Chapter IV.

Transatlantic invention for intruding on the great man's privacy and, then, misreporting him. To similar causes is due the plethora of books of American travel, to which we shall readvert, and their attempts to commemorate what their authors have hardly allowed themselves time to see. None can write really well of a city or of a mountain without having allowed its influences to saturate slowly into his soul. But the newspaper correspondent must have its secret by photograph, in a trice, and register it by telegraph.

Some of the artistic, as well as many of the social, peculiarities of the United States may doubtless be traced to their form of government. After the obvious wants of life are provided for, democracy stimulates the production of books. An intellectual world, where the utility if not the beauty of knowledge is universally recognised, rises on the ruins of rank. There is a race in which the prize is to the swift, and every one tries to draw the eyes of others by innumerable imperfect efforts. *Multa non multum.* Art is abundant and inferior: whitewashed wood and brick pass for marble, puerile buffoonery for humour, and rhythmical spasms for poetry. Antiquity presents only apparent exceptions to this rule. Athens ultimately attained the utmost democracy, consistent with the institution of slavery; but her citizens had previously inherited, from a past so vague that they claimed to have originally sprung from their narrow soil, a set of prescriptions in pre-established harmony with the Hellenic mind. The ideas of limit and order were paramount on their stage: they never knew when they had done enough, but they always knew when they had said enough. Their most agitated assemblies were still critical; and no orator ventured to address them in the style of a Western member of Congress. Formality is the prevailing defect of aristocratic literatures: they are apt to be precise and restricted. A democratic literature runs the risk of lawlessness, inaccu-

racy, and irreverence. From either extreme the Athenian and Florentine and Elizabethan classics were preserved by the artistic inspirations of a flexible tradition. The one is displayed in the so-called Augustan ages of letters, in the France of Louis XIV., and the England of Queen Anne, when men of genius—caring more to cultivate style than to establish truth, more to captivate the taste than to stir the passions—moved, with clipt wings, in a charmed circle of thought. The other is most conspicuously developed in America, a country which is not only democratic, but youthful without the modesty of youth, unmellowed by the past, and untrammelled by authority; where the spirit of adventure is unrestrained by feelings of personal loyalty; where order and regularity of all kinds are apt to be misnamed subservience; where vehemence, vigour, and wit are common; good taste, profundity, and imagination rare—a country whose untamed material imparts its tamelessness to the people, and diverts them from the task of civilisation to the desire of conquest. We speak of their average mind and average literature, which reflects the glitter and rush of Broadway or the impetuosity of frontier life, for the more reflective minds among them aim after a higher standard. "We have," writes one of these, himself not wholly unaffected by the national vices, which he has yet the wisdom to condemn,—"we have need of a more rigorous scholastic rule, such an asceticism as only the hardihood and devotion of the scholar himself can enforce. We live in the sun and on the surface, a thin plausible superficial existence, and talk of muse and prophet, of art and creation. But out of our shallow and frivolous way of life, how can greatness ever grow?"

American literature is cramped on another side by the spirit of imitation. Up to the present time it has been, in great measure, an offshoot or prolongation of the literature of Europe. Native artists have been prone to take their intel-

lectual culture from abroad, and to seek the sources, the rules, and the sanctions of their art, in the old world. Their themes are frequently European, their treatment of them still more so; and their highest ambition, like that of all colonists, has hitherto been to receive a favourable verdict, not from the country of their birth, but from that of their ancestors. Among their early writers of note, Franklin was a practical disciple of Locke, Jefferson of the French Revolution. Latterly the Americans have followed the French in dress, talk, eating, and architecture, the English and Germans in thought: their bonnets are Gallican, but their books are Teutonic. "The literary genius of Great Britain," says De Tocqueville, "still darts its rays into the recesses of the forests of the New World. I read the feudal play of Henry V., for the first time, in a log-house. They draw on the treasures of English literature; and I find the literature of England growing on their own soil. The small number of men who write are English in substance, and still more in form." Of the great number of men who have written since the date of this criticism, only a few have written anything to refute it. Another French critic has remarked that Washington Irving paints all countries but his own in the style of Addison—a remark applicable to all his works except his *Knickerbocker*, which is, because of its greater nationality, the most salient of the group. Fenimore Cooper, though possessed of less artistic power, less fluency, and less variety of illustration than Irving, is more vigorous and peculiar. His sea-pieces are unsurpassed; but on land he everywhere remembers Scott, and his heroes, his conversations, and his mottoes disclose the latent imitation. The writers of the last thirty years have been making strenuous efforts towards nationality; but they are still hampered by Transatlantic, often French, German, and Italian, rather than English, associations. In the style of Mr. Motley we cannot help tracing the influence of Carlyle,

and the reaction begun by Emerson against the reign of Lockist, and Scotch, psychology, is admitted to have derived some impulse from *Sartor Resartus*. Among the vagaries of its followers—as Alcott, Thoreau, Parker, and Margaret Fuller, none is more salient than their mania for German and Oriental quotations. But this movement merits a distinct study. Let it suffice, in this place, to remark on an unhappy commercial accident which operates as an external cause to restrain the graver intellectual energies of the people within the old grooves. The tyranny which five centuries' load of classics, in the same tongue, almost inevitably exercises over the mind of a nation not yet a century old, is materially strengthened by the non-existence of an international copyright. This gross injustice to the authors on both sides of the Atlantic, for the benefit of the publishers on one, leads to the intellectual market being glutted with stolen goods. Considerations of interest in business are of course everything; those of principle, or art, or patriotism, nothing. As long, therefore, as a publisher in Boston or New York can republish a good book—or a bad book that has been puffed into large currency—written in Edinburgh or London, without paying for it, he is sure to prefer an undertaking involving no risk and comparatively little outlay, to another which involves both, *i.e.*, the republication of the English to the new publication of an American book; for the English book has already attained its reputation, and its popularity in America is secured;[1] while the American book, for the copyright of which he has to pay, has, except in the case of a few authors, still to win its spurs. But, this circumstance apart, the influence exerted, sometimes consciously sometimes uncon-

[1] American readers, as a rule, follow, almost slavishly, the verdicts of the ordinary British public. There are exceptions; they sometimes anticipate our appreciation of an original thinker, as Carlyle. On the other hand, they swallow, in larger doses even than we, such popular platitudes as those of A. K. H. B. and Tupper.

sciously to those affected, by the writers of an older and stabler, if not more civilised, nation on those of a younger, is at first, in the nature of things, excessive; and in the intellectual relation of Continental to American art we have a modern version of the ancient "Græcia capta ferum." It is convenient for a foreign reviewer to take shelter behind the confession of a satirist who will not willingly endure from outsiders the repetition of his own rebukes. "Your buxom goddess of freedom," he says to his countrymen—

> "Hides her red hands in gloves, pinches up her lithe waist,
> And makes herself wretched with transmarine taste;
> She loses her fresh country charms when she takes
> Any mirror except her own rivers and lakes.
> You steal Englishmen's books and think Englishmen's thought;
> With their salt on her tail your wild eagle is caught;
> Your literature suits its each whisper and motion
> To what will be thought of it over the ocean."

If the people of the United States had spoken a language of their own, some modification of Mexican or Cherokee, it is probable they would have found originality more easily, without the violences and eccentricities in the midst of which they are beginning to "sign their intellectual Declaration of Independence." This fact is confessed by one of the few signatories, in whose pages there is neither eccentricity nor violence—"Bred in English habits of thought, as most of us are, we have not yet modified our instincts to the necessities of our new modes of life. Our philosophers have not yet taught us what is best, nor have our poets sung to us what is most beautiful in the kind of life that we must lead, and therefore we still read the old English wisdom, and harp upon the ancient strings."

It may, however, be doubted if the writer of this sentence —the greatest prose artist of the States, himself a scion of the pure Pilgrim blood—realises (the mass of English critics certainly fail to realise) the complexity of the problem,

political, social, and intellectual, with which his countrymen have had to deal. America is not all English, not even all Caucasian. She has been from the first century of settlement a theatre open to first comers from every clime and of every origin. "Men," says one of her writers, "come hither in nations:" hence inevitable want of unity and composite spirit. In one locality the prevailing language is still French, in another Spanish. In all the principal towns there are German quarters, Chinese in shoals in the far west, and Irish everywhere. There are the germs of all politics—"Aristocrat, Autocrat, Democrat"—and of all religions. The State that is blent, and the literature that is constructed, out of these often jarring elements must, in the long run, be like no one ingredient; it must be an amalgam of all. Englishmen are too prone to forget that the partially kindred blood, which ought to promote friendship, cannot insure identity of aim. Safe in their island home they smile at a turbulence largely due to the lawless spirits they have banished across the seas. The Old World is strong enough to overlook the petulance of the New, which in its turn is great enough to receive, and, it may be, in process of time to harmonise, the elements of discord in the Old. As regards literature, the best advice is that of the gentlest, finest, most cosmopolitan spirit of the West: "The greatest lesson which the lives of literary men teach us is told in a single word—Wait. . . . Our national character, with its feverish impatient throbs, wants the dignity of repose. We seem to live in the midst of a battle—there is such a din, such a hurrying to and fro. In the streets of a crowded city it is difficult to move slowly, in the press of our life to be calm. In this stress of wind and tide, all professions seem to drag their anchors, and are swept out into the main. The voices of the present say—Come! But the voices of the past say—Wait!"

CHAPTER II.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD.

We may trace the influence of the controlling facts or tendencies to which we have referred, through the three great periods under which American history obviously falls: —

I. The Colonial, or Period of Settlement.

II. The Revolutionary, or Period of Struggle for Independence.

III. The first three quarters of the Nineteenth century.

I. The voices of the first period are, to the modern English reader, few, faint, and far. It was a time of great and fruitful activity. The constitutions of the early states were being tentatively laid down, and social rules of life, destined to influence their descendants, were being formulated by the settlers; but literature, outside the range of a primitive politics and a severe theology, was only beginning, under unfavourable conditions, to exist. The prose and rude verse of the Colonial days are, with some exceptions, the stammering speech of an energetic, industrial people, whose hands are in constant conflict with barren deserts, wild beasts, or rude tribes; whose hearts are aflame with fervour; but whose heads are bewildered by superstitions, as natural to their circumstances as to their age. That age was, in some respects, fortunate in having no professional authors; for the absence of literary ambitions, with their attendant jealousies, left the pioneers

of civilisation more free to devote themselves to their besetting tasks, to accomplish which, and not to secure either present praise or future fame, they gave alike their sinews and their brains. Professor Coit Tyler's recent book on this Era of the Dawn is so judicious, fair, and full (its sole grave defect being a sometimes diffusive iteration of exaggerated praise), that most readers, whose life is limited, will accept it as their authority for the matter and manner of the half-forgotten folios it has rescued from oblivion. This author roughly divides our first period into two sections:—that from 1607 (the date of the settlement of Virginia) to 1676, when the close of King Philip's war established the power of the settlers to hold their ground against the native tribes; and that from 1676 to 1765, the date of the passing of the Stamp Act. During the former interval, he notes that the civilisation of the New World was due to immigrants bred in England; during the latter it was mainly "in the hands of Americans born in America." Two features are common to both: the scant literature of the time was developed in diverse groups of states, having with each other only distant and casual relationships; it had no national character: moreover, the civilisation was almost wholly transplanted from England. The congeries of races, which it is the great problem of the Federation to harmonise, had not begun to gather. The Latin elements — Spanish and French — of Florida and Louisiana had not yet been introduced; nor the Celtic, nor the German, save in the Dutch settlement of New Amsterdam, which, passing perforce into our hands in 1664, became New York.

There is, in the writings of the early time, no trace of the cosmopolitan spirit which has only during the last few decades begun to take shape; nor do they, in any considerable degree, reflect the differences of rank. Of the two original "distributing centres" of our race, the northern was

almost wholly peopled by well-to-do representatives of the middle class; the "Old Dominion" of Virginia, the foundation of which partially realised the dreams of Raleigh, was originally settled by more motley crews, consisting, on the one hand, of adventurous gentlemen like himself; on the other, by an attendant throng of dissolute retainers, who left their country for their country's good. Two centuries later the heirs of the one set were the great statesmen and planters, of the other the "mean whites" of the South.

As Virginia was the parent of Anglo-American life, so it was the parent of Anglo-American literature. But this colony, founded at the time of the meridian blaze of English imagination, when Shakespeare was, in his greatest plays, holding up the mirror to our grandest life, has in its written records little trace of the richness and grasp of our passionate Elizabethan thought. The first impulse of an emigrant is not to write dramas, but to send home a letter to his friends. Like the Spaniards of a still earlier age, who in the track of Cortez and Pizarro had been lured from their native land by the thirst of conquest, discovery, or gain, these Virginian Englishmen, in the pauses between the stress of fortification and crude legislature, were content with more or less connected notes of their new experiences of nature and of men, of sea and land, of battle and of tillage. The most remarkable of these is the account of the first considerable Western settlement by its first Governor, Captain John Smith. The life of this remarkable man, traveller and fighter over half the world then known, is one of the most vivid of romances: from his single-handed encounter with the three Turks, whose heads he cut off, in the East, to the rash exploration when he was saved from an Indian club by the child Pocahontas, it reads more like a canto of *The Cid* or a chapter of *Westward Ho!* than a page of real biography. His *True*

Relation of Virginia is characterised by the graphic, often quaint, vigour of a style like that of Defoe, and by the sound sense, dominating will, and administrative power which it displays. This narrative, published in London (1608), has been recognised as the earliest book in American literature. Smith, who died in 1631, after, in other volumes, detailing his adventures, may be regarded as the last pure scion of the race of our Norse sea-kings. Two years subsequent to the date of Smith's *True Relation* there appeared (1610) William Strachey's account of *The Wrack and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates*, by his commander on the outward voyage, "upon and from the islands of the Bermudas," which, resplendent with passages of descriptive power, is believed to have supplied the groundwork of "The Tempest." Classical scholarship was, in the same district, represented by George Sandys, who, exhorted thereto by his friend Michael Drayton, completed on the banks of the James river (1626) a highly creditable, because frequently imaginative though sometimes rough, translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. About the same time the Welsh Puritan, Vaughan, sent home from Newfoundland his *Golden Fleece*. In 1633 Maryland was detached from Virginia for the benefit of King Charles' favourite, Lord Baltimore; and nearly a generation afterwards the two sister States, as "Leah and Rachel" were extolled in John Hammond's vigorous apology. At an earlier date Governor Smith had felt called on to defend the country of his adoption against injurious rumours, the effect of which in retarding emigration he quaintly clenches—"The company in London became suitors to his Majesty to compel vagabonds and condemned men to go thither. Nay, some did choose to be hanged before they would go thither, *and were*." Similarly, Hammond, on a visit to London, expresses his amaze at the ignorance of people in a condition below that of "the meanest servant in Virginia," who would rather cry

on the streets, or "stuff Newgate and Bridewell, or cleave to Tyburn," than forsake their even then overcrowded lanes for "a place of pleasure and plenty." Two years later the witty Alsop, in lighter strain, celebrated Maryland alone. The invitations of these settlers have, after the lapse of two centuries, had a response beyond their reckoning. Before the Revolution, the States numbered three millions; now their population has reached fifty millions. Eleven years after its settlement, Virginia received an importation destined to poison its life-blood. In 1819, a Dutch vessel, "rigged with curses dark," sailed up the James river, and landed, on its north bank, twenty negro slaves. The other arrivals of the early time—especially between 1640-60—were troops of Cavaliers. After the Restoration, it received an infusion of old Cromwellians —exiles in their turn; but these last neither disturbed the loyalty, nor seriously affected the manners, of the colony.

"The Merry Monarch" has been credited with a clemency largely due to indifferentism: he tolerated Milton and esteemed Marvell; as James V. of Scotland had continued, through life, to cherish regard for his old tutor Sir David Lyndsay. But Charles II., if a poor hater, was a weak lover; and satire said that his succession to power meant "indemnity to his enemies and oblivion to his friends." He wore a robe of Virginian silk at his coronation, passed Navigation Acts tending to ruin the colony, and sent out Sir William Berkeley to misrule it. This incompetent person having exasperated the people, by leaving them unprotected against the Indian raids, they chose a chief for themselves, Nathaniel Bacon, who repelled the savages, but was arraigned as a rebel, and subsequently died with suspicious suddenness. The leading incidents of his struggle with the Governor have been preserved in the *Burwell Papers*, a fantastic but animated record, with which Mr. Tyler collates a set of anonymous

verses on Bacon's death, containing some trenchant, if tough, lines, *e.g.*—

> "Virginia's foes,
> To whom, for secret crimes, just vengeance owes
> Deserved plagues, dreading their just desert,
> Corrupted death, by Paracelsian art,
> Him to destroy. . . . Our arms, though ne'er so strong,
> Will want the aid of his commanding tongue,
> Which conquered more than Cæsar."

In this scattered feudal society, there were neither the inducements nor the opportunities for any varied development of speculative thought or artistic criticism; and the spirit of Sir William Berkeley's prayer, "I thank God we have no free schools here nor printing . . . God keep us from both!" continued to inspire it. The first press in the Old Dominion dates from 1681, the second only from 1766, and neither had much to do. In 1693 the Scotch immigrant, Blair, had the honour of founding the College of William and Mary, but it continued, in practice, to be no more than a high-class secondary school. Of Virginian writers previous to the time of the Revolution, it only remains, in our rapid survey, to mention Robert Beverley—the first and perhaps the most lively historian of the colony—and William Byrd, who, being employed to fix the bounds between Virginia and North Carolina, diverged from the lines of an official record, to assail with vigorous invective the inhabitants of the younger and rival settlement—a settlement of which John Lawson had previously, with equal unreserve, celebrated the praises. Maryland is, during the same period, somewhat unpleasantly, represented in literature by the verse satire of Ebenezer Cook, which, though mainly written in the Hudibrastic jingle so often a model to early American versifiers, seems in its best passages nearer to the original than other contemporary imitations. The following is, in the space, one of the keenest travesties

of the besetting sin of a sect singularly free from "sins of blood"—a sect, on both sides of the Atlantic, that has passed by thrift and perseverance through persecution to prosperity; that, as others, had and has its hypocrites as well as its saints and martyrs.

"To this intent,[1] with guide before,
I tripped it to the eastern shore.
While, riding near a sandy bay,
I met a Quaker, yea and nay;
A pious conscientious rogue
As e'er wore bonnet or a brogue;[2]
Who neither swore nor kept his word,
But cheated, in the fear of God;
And, when his debts he would not pay,
By light within he ran away."

South Carolina (settled 1669), unconscious of her future *rôle* as the great political protagonist of Massachusetts, gives, during this period, a somewhat thin contribution to controversy in the attacks on Whitfield by Alexander Garden, who complains, in one salient sentence, that rational religion is "crucified between two thieves—Infidelity and Enthusiasm;" while Georgia, the latest of the Southern group, an afterbirth of General Oglethorpe's philanthropy (1733), bites her founder's hand, in the pointed polemic against his administration by his adversaries Anderson, Douglass, and Tailfer. The great colonies — New York and New Jersey (made English in 1664), Pennsylvania and Delaware (established, in 1682, on Penn's new principle of driving bargains with the natives instead of massacring them) — have, during the seventeenth and early years of the eighteenth centuries, even less to show of general literary interest. A few sermons, descriptions of Indians, accounts of events, and bad verses, make up the list; but here and there there are, in these scattered leaves, traces of the cosmopolitan spirit that afterwards characterised this central group.

[1] To buy and sell. [2] Dutch, *brock*, meaning breeches.

Meanwhile, on the north of the same coast-line, other settlements had been made, on other conditions. In 1620, —shortly after the fateful black cargo had been discharged on a bank of the James river, — the Pilgrim Fathers, setting sail from Holland, their eleven years' halting-place, had landed at New Plymouth. They were followed, in 1628, by the first settlers of Massachusetts Bay; in 1629, by those of New Hampshire. In 1630, a larger importation of men, of more wealth and higher station, came over under Winthrop. The next decade, that immediately preceding our civil war, saw the foundation of Connecticut, and the arrival of a throng of exiles, mainly inspired by the same spirit. With a sprinkling of adventurers, like the early Virginians, the great majority were religious refugees or political enthusiasts who had been driven, by hate or fear of Strafford and Laud, from their farms or country seats, tabernacles or universities, in the Old England, to plant their feet and faith firmly on the shores of the New, and endeavour to establish there an ideal commonwealth. This commonwealth was an almost literal realisation of the desire of the most thorough-going Puritans at home. The men who stayed behind, to fight at Marston Moor and Dunbar, were idealists; but even they were constrained, in some degree, to adapt their practice to the requirements of tradition, and the force of circumstance, in an already complex society: they had to yield to the practical genius of a beneficent despot, and accept the author of the *Areopagitica* as their secretary of state. The men who followed Miles Standish and Endicott and John Winthrop across the seas and against the Indians, were able, with scarce a trammel, to thrust to its conclusion their theory of life. Extremists, with no hindrance but their hard physical environment, they were able to break with all the Past, save that of the Hebrews, and put into practice a policy more rigid than that of the Ironsides. In their early history there are two

dominant features — a force of character, half bodily half spiritual, rarely equalled, never surpassed, and a fervid, almost ferocious, narrowness of mind that would have shocked Luther, staggered Knox, and satisfied Calvin. Their personal intrepidity was equal to that of De Soto's pioneers or Drake's seamen; and it was inspired by a purpose more persistent, in part at least because it was animated by a belief in realities beyond the range of material vision. The little wooden towns, guarded by the pike and matchlock and piety of men, putting their trust in God and keeping their powder dry, within a generation after the landing of the *Mayflower*, had developed into the "United Colonies of New England," destined to form the intellectual and moral backbone of Anglo-America. But from this early federation—on whose model in some respects that of a continent has been framed—one colony, Rhode Island, was excluded, because it would not accept the practical principles of tyranny to which these early fanatics for theoretic freedom stubbornly clung. The men who left the green lanes of Kent and Sussex for the bleak rocks of Cape Cod, were martyrs for conscience sake; but what their conscience demanded was permission to hold and preach "the truth," by no means liberty of thought. The worst and surest lesson of persecution—how to persecute—they had learnt by heart; and their only rivals (within the domain of semi-civilisation), in the practice and precept of intolerance, are to be found among the Inquisitors of Spain or the Scottish Covenanters. The literature, outside of that concerned with the interests, arguments, and battles of their faith, is a mere fringe on the life of the community entrusted to their care. It consists of description and narrative, the best passages of which rise to the dignity of prose-poetry or of history, and a few scattered verses. Enough, under the first head, remains to show that the susceptibility of the old northern voyagers to the fresh impres-

sions and aspects of animate and inanimate nature was in no way inferior to that of the southern. We have many pages about the wonders and mysteries of the great deep, over which their writers crossed; the wildernesses they had to traverse; the strange races they encountered; descriptions of new plants and birds and fishes, that relieve the stress and strain of controversy, and show us, by glimpses, a heart within the breast of those cast-iron men. Such passages as these are frequent in William Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*, a MS. lost, till it was found in 1855 in the Fulham Library, and meanwhile plundered by his nephew, Nathaniel Norton. On leaving Leyden (1820), Bradford writes—

"So they left that goodly and pleasant city, which had been their resting-place near twelve years; but they knew they were pilgrims, and looked not so much on those things, but lift up their eyes to the heavens, their dearest country, and quieted their spirits."

And on reaching Plymouth—

"Being thus arrived in a good harbour, and brought safe to land, they fell upon their knees and blessed the God of heaven, who had brought them over the vast and furious ocean, and delivered them from all the perils and miseries thereof, again to set their feet on the firm and stable land, their proper element. And no marvel if they were thus joyful, seeing wise Seneca was so affected with sailing a few miles on the coast of his own Italy, as he affirmed, that he had rather remain twenty years on his way by land than pass by sea in a short time, so tedious and dreadful was the same unto him."

Nine years later Francis Higginson, after being "horribly tossed" by the waves, similarly rejoices—

"*June 24th.*—This day we had all a clear and comfortable sight of America. *June 29th.*—As we passed along, it was wonderful to behold so many islands replenished with thick wood and high trees, and many fair green pastures. . . . Those that love their own chimney corner, and dare not go beyond their own town's end, shall never have the honour to see these wonderful works of the Almighty God."

William Wood draws a like pleasant picture of the haven of Massachusetts Bay; and after a prevalent fashion, intersperses

his prose with verse descriptions: one of the latter—that of New England trees—has considerable merit, both of epithet and rhythm, and would have more, were it less closely modelled on the impossible forest of Spenser's First Book. A little later, we have the equally graphic land sketches of John Josselyn, with the incident (used by Longfellow in his Endicott tragedy) of the gathering of a wasp's nest for a fruit, and his description of a bird whose existence is, like that of the roc in the *Arabian Nights*, maliciously disputed. The pilhannaw is

"a monstrous great bird . . . four times as big as a goshawk, white-mailed, having two or three purple feathers in her head as long as goose's feathers . . . . her head is as big as a child's of a year old, a very princely bird. When she soars abroad all sorts of feathered creatures hide themselves; yet she never preys upon them but upon fawns and jackals. She aeries in the woods upon the high hills of Ossapy."

Equally vivid in the field of action is Winslow's narrative of Miles Standish's first encounter with the Indians; or Captain John Mason's of the "Mystic Fight" in the Pequot war, where, the wigwams being burnt, the savages ran "into the very flames," and there were "only seven taken captive."

The last reference reminds us that we are reviewing the records of men hardened in the battle for life, whose earnestness was continually passing into ferocity. Their general tone of feeling towards the aborigines is inhuman; and nowhere more so than when it finds expression side by side with outbursts of a profound and pitiless piety. Two sentences from *The Wonder Working Providence* of Edward Johnson, foremost of the soldier-gentlemen who came over with Winthrop, will suffice to illustrate this—

"The Lord, in mercy toward His poor churches, having thus destroyed these bloody barbarous Indians, He returns His people in safety to their vessels, where they take account of their prisoners. The squaws and some young youths they brought home with them: and finding the men to be deeply guilty of the crimes they undertook the war for, they brought away only their heads."

Among the leading actors or thinkers of the time there are three conspicuously honourable exceptions to the policy of conversion by extermination :—John Eliot, the "Apostle of the Indians," into whose language he translated a great portion of the Scriptures; his benevolent friend, Daniel Gookin, an immigrant from England through Virginia, originator of the claim, "no taxation without representation," the rumour of whose death, according to Mr. Tyler, "carried sorrow into every red man's wigwam in Massachusetts"; and Roger Williams. The last, as the finest figure of our early period, demands a brief notice in the most cursory sketch of its development; but to appreciate his moral and intellectual courage, we must revert to the forces with which he had to contend. Williams, says the historian Bancroft, was "the first in Christendom to assert, in its plenitude, the doctrine of Liberty of Conscience; he was the harbinger of Milton, the precursor of Taylor." His prime claim to our respect is the fact that he asserted this doctrine under the most unfavourable circumstances; and was, in its defence, almost single-handed against the best as well as the worst of his compeers.

The strength and weakness alike of the seventeenth century Puritans, lay rooted in a Hebraic belief in their being a chosen people, sent on a divinely-guided crusade against error and sin in all the corners of the earth. The results of this conviction appear in sublime and in ludicrous aspects in the early records of New England. Many of the accounts of the perils and escapes of the early voyagers are written in the style and saturated with the sentiment of Bunyan passing through the Valley of the Shadow, as through his life, attended or beset by "legions of demons that lurk, armies of angels that soar." But the stamp of Bunyan's half insanity, as well as his inspiration, is on the pages of those warrior-preachers; and their special providences often degenerate into

almost blasphemous burlesque, *e.g.*, Anthony Thacker, saved from shipwreck, narrates: "As I was sliding off the rock into the sea the Lord directed my toes into a joint in the rock's side, as also the tops of some of my fingers." Another zealot informs us that the mice in the cupboard, eating the Episcopal Prayer Book and leaving untouched the Psalms, converted him to Presbyterianism; another, that a barber of Boston, called to draw a tooth in Roxbury, was frozen to death on the way home, because he used, when at his work of hair-clipping, to argue against predestination; another, that a Harvard president was mysteriously cut short in his public prayer, after which the college was found to be on fire. Mather's *Remarkable Providences* are in great measure a record of infatuations similar to those of a later age so incomparably gibbeted by Sidney Smith. These are the grotesques of a superstition, the essence of which lay in an assumption of infallibility as absolute as, during the same period, with equal self-sacrifice and zeal, the Jesuit missionaries were inculcating in Canada among the Hurons. Such a belief, accompanied with the historically twin dogma, that our eternal destiny is dependent upon the accuracy of our theological views, is inconsistent with tolerance and ought to lead to persecution. A happy inconsistency, a humane faint-heartedness, has protected many ages and nations from their legitimate consequences; but the leaders of New England were neither faint-hearted nor humane, and they accepted these consequences as emphatically as Calvin did when, for the saving of souls, he burned Servetus. Their key-major is struck in the following sentence of Edward Johnson:—

"You are not to set up for tolerating times, nor shall any of you be content with this that you are set at liberty; but take up your arms and march manfully on till all opposers of Christ's kingly power be abolished; and as for you who are called to sound forth His silver trumpets, blow loud and shrill to this chiefest treble tune—for the armies of the great Jehovah are at hand."

Thomas Shepard, in the same spirit, declared that toleration was "Satan's policy;" and in his *Cobbler of Agawam* Nathaniel Ward, an accomplished Cambridge scholar, exiled by Laud, breaks out—

"I dare take upon me to be the herald of New England so far as to proclaim to the world in the name of our colony, that all Familists, Antinomians, Anabaptists, and other enthusiasts, shall have free liberty —to keep away from us; and such as will come to be gone as fast as they can, the sooner the better." And elsewhere, "Polypiety is the greatest impiety in the world. . . . To authorise an untruth by toleration of State is . . . to batter God out of His chair. . . . He that is willing to tolerate any unsound opinion, that his own may also be tolerated, though never so sound, will for a need hang God's Bible at the devil's girdle. . . . It is said that men ought to have liberty of their conscience, and that it is persecution to debar them of it. . . . Let all the wits under the heavens lay their heads together and find an assertion worse than this, I will petition to be chosen the universal idiot of the world. . . . I desire all good men may be saved from their lunatic creed by infidelity. . . . Since I knew what to fear, my timorous heart hath dreaded three things: a blazing star appearing in the air; a State comet, I mean a favourite rising in a kingdom; a new opinion spreading in religion."

Considering how close a travesty these sentences convey of the sentiments of Laud himself, we are half inclined to suspect Mr. Ward of playing Mephistopheles, like Defoe in his "Short way with the Dissenters;" in gravity or mockery he has the merit of saying the strongest words in defence of a system of which, in the New World, he is the frankest advocate: they are the natural outcome of the popular theology, of the hell painted so lovingly by Thomas Hooker, of the total depravity in the contemplation of which Thomas Shepard seems to revel, of the ponderous pages of terrible logic with which John Cotton used to "love to sweeten his mouth before he went to sleep." As far as the graver matters of the law were concerned, these saintly men were only singular in their sincerity, their contempt for half measures, and their power. The early history of New England being that of a Democratic Theocracy, there was no room for the

intellectually fertile antagonism of Priest and Prophet: the persons and functions of the two, with many of the prerogatives of King, were combined. The Church being "free," in the sense of controlling the Legislature, the mass of the people were intellectually, and in many respects, legally, the slaves of the clergy. The pulpit was the high throne of State, the rostra, and the judgment seat; the sermons the only play. The religious services lasted commonly for five hours, and the whole population, over infancy, were compelled to attend them: they were driven in by elders deputed for the task, and the sexes herded apart, like oxen in pens. Boys who fell asleep were whipped, women tickled. Absence without excuse of "illness or other necessary cause" was punished first by a fine, then by the stocks. The week-day life of the people was regulated with like severity. To any one of a genial temperament, existence in those days must have been one of pains and penalties. Amusements were interdicted, and the most innocent recreations condemned. The Puritans, as Macaulay tells us, "hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear, but because it gave pleasure to the spectators." From the time when Endicott and Standish struck down the pretty "Maypole of Merry Mount" (which Mr. Hawthorne's genius has wreathed again), and called the place "Dagon," to that in which the rival interests of the Revolution set a limit to this tyranny, life in the New England of the "old colonial day" must have been more dismal than life in Cromwellian, almost in proportion as that was more dismal than life in Elizabethan England. The nearest parallel is to be found in Scotland during the later part of the same century, when, Mr. Buckle tells us, a mother was publicly censured for kissing her child on the Sabbath day. But at New Plymouth a maid-servant who had smiled in church "was threatened with banishment from the colony," and a woman who ventured to blame an elder "had a cleft-stick put on her tongue."

Laughter was frowned at—"How can you be merry?" said a gruff fellow to some harmless youngsters, "unless you are sure of your salvation;" the use of starch and tobacco regarded as criminal; "a solemn association" was "instituted" against long hair; and a lady who wore a fashionable dress, pronounced by a high cleric "fitter to be kicked, if she were of a kickable substance, than humoured."

What wonder that the ascetic zealots, who were kindled into a rage of gloom by the sight of a cheerful countenance, a coquettish curl, or a flowing dress, should have fined, scourged, branded, and banished from their Zion all Baptists, Quakers, and men of every shade of belief except their own. A heavy price, the risk of being hanged for a false premise or conclusion, had to be paid for holding acres rent free, owning no "superior," and dwelling on the edge of a new land in the midst of exciting alarms. To the fantasies logically consequent upon their creed they added others incident to their condition. People in peril are, with few exceptions, superstitious, and, despite their confident faith in a polestar Providence, these pioneers felt like sailors in a rough and unknown sea. They were in constant contact with novelties which predispose to credulity, and, breathing the same electric atmosphere that has so materially conduced to modern Spiritualism, they were often in a state of body, as well as of mind, ready to be impressed by marvels, or imposed upon by hallucinations. The natural outlets being stopped, their pent up enthusiasm found vent in the most physically dangerous over-excitement—that called religious. One saint's prayers, we are told, "were so fervent, that he bled at the nose through the agony with which he laboured at them;" and we can imagine that the same perverted overstrain developed many incipient Puritan Saint Theresas, of whom the latest types are to be found probably at Oneida Creek. Never was the verse of Joel more verified—

"Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." "Living," writes Professor Tyler, "on a narrow strip of land, between the two infinities of the ocean and the wilderness . . . they had overpowering manifestations of spiritual force; they heard awful voices in the air;[1] and strange sights glimmered before their eyes on the verge of the forest." Winthrop's history is full of strange records of mysterious man-shaped gleams closing and parting in sparkles over midnight hills, and of dreadful cries heard "by divers godly persons," shifting and calling over evening seas. This state of mind was perfectly adapted to receive the belief in the direct personal agency of the evil spirit—"Sathan is now in his passions," says Nathaniel Ward; "he loves to fish in roiled waters"—and to foster the Witch-mania, so conspicuous a feature of the age. Nothing can be added to Mr. Leckie's impressive record of a series of tragedies, the crowning pathos of which lies in the fact that, in many cases, the victims themselves shared the delusion. Early Christian, Catholic, and Protestant martyrs were supported in the flames by the faith that they were being borne, on a fiery chariot, to celestial light; the wretches who were tortured and slain in Scotland and North America, during the seventeenth century, were oppressed by the belief that their present agonies were a prelude of those to come. The first outbreak of this popular fanaticism in New England is marked by the execution, in 1645, of four old women: after this the fire smouldered (the keen persecution between 1650-60 of the Quakers and Baptists affording sport enough for the hunters of souls), till in 1692 it broke out in the great massacre of Salem. This crisis, in the course of which, besides a host of women, one minister and one dog were hanged, ultimately closed in a reaction, with the recantations and regrets of the principal persecutors.

[1] Compare Macaulay's account of the semi-delirium of Bunyan.

Into this society, in 1631 (crossing the seas from Bristol and arriving with Eliot), came ROGER WILLIAMS, a self-disfrocked English Churchman, of Welsh impulsiveness, of quick temper, of imperfect tact, but whose nature "showed a heart within, blood-tinctured with a veined humanity." There is no evidence to show that he was, in matters of abstract speculation, in advance of his age, or that he doubted the infallibility of his creed, or questioned the danger of those who refused to accept it; but he had got a firm hold of the idea—in his age most rare—that men cannot be dragooned into orthodoxy. In his word controversies—notably with the more fanatical of the followers of George Fox—he was as unsparing of invective as his compeers; but he held fast to his maxim that "persecutors of men's bodies seldom or never do these men's souls good." Unlike the New England hierophants, he was a consistent voluntary: he maintained that Church and State have separate spheres, and that the civil power is concerned solely with "the bodies, goods, and outward estates" of men. The offence given by these views, aggravated by his questioning the right of the white colonists to seize the red man's land, drew him into such disgrace that, after five years' residence as minister of Salem, he was brought to trial, and driven from Massachusetts into the wilderness. Thence, after many privations, gathering round him men of like mind, and inviting the poor, the needy, the discredited for conscience sake, he secured a tract of country from the Indians, and founded his own colony of Rhode Island. Shortly after his settlement, we find him interceding on behalf of the tribes, among whose tents he had often lodged, and rejoicing at the close of the Pequot war that "*some* of the Christian chiefs are *almost* adverse from killing men and women." When his State was excluded from the Federation, he went to England (then in the throes of the Civil War) to obtain for it a charter, and, having succeeded in

his mission, returned to govern it paternally for twenty years longer before his death. During his visit to the old home he published his great challenge to intolerance, entitled, *The Bloody Tenet of Persecution for Cause of Conscience.* This work, issued in the same year (1644) as the *Areopagitica*, went beyond it in discarding even Milton's limitations.

"It is," Williams dared to say, "the will and command of God that . . . a permission of the most Paganish, Jewish, Turkish, or Anti-christian consciences and worships be granted to all men, in all nations and countries: and they are to be fought against with that sword which is only in soul-matters able to conquer—to wit, the sword of God's spirit."

Mr. John Cotton having attempted to answer this in his *Bloody Tenet Washed*,—one of those tracts, whose very titles help to explain Mr. Foster's problem as to the aversion of men of taste to Evangelical Religion,—Williams conclusively replied:

"I must confess, while heaven and earth last, that no one tenet that either London, England, or the world doth harbour, is so heretical, blasphemous, seditious, and dangerous to the corporal, to the spiritual, to the present, to the eternal good of men, as the bloody tenet (however washed and whited) of persecution for cause of conscience."

His after writings, especially his defence, as President of his State, against the charge of instigating anarchy, are all inspired by the same noble enthusiasm for liberty, tempered and controlled by the good common sense that made him a capable administrator as well as an effective philanthropist. Two hundred years could not pass without a few free-thinkers bold enough to fling down a random glove of challenge; but Williams stands alone, during that period, on the Western Continent in combining the most intense religiousness, almost orthodoxy, with the acceptance, in its full extent, of the results of universal toleration. The teaching and the life of this great man cannot have been without their influence in preparing the way for the change of intellectual atmosphere that made

New England—with the exception of the rigid square of Connecticut—the foster-mother of the most advanced thought of our age ; but Williams, like every one in advance of his time of less than superlative genius, was long half-forgotten, and the march of the main body went on without him.

The strength of the clerical despotism was due in part to circumstances, in part to the enthusiasm controlled by sense, and the worldly wisdom of the rulers. Like the Jesuits, they determined to enlist learning on their side. The education of the Continent owes no more to Loyola, than does that of North America to the sturdy patronage of the Puritans. Otherwise fanatical, they disdained to avail themselves of the superstition of ignorance, and their enlightened policy prolonged their tenure of office, though it ultimately led to a change of government. The respect for learning, and the faith in its results, happily conspicuous in the first stages of the colony, were due, in part, to the fact that it was so largely recruited by men who had, previous to their exile, obtained a deserved reputation among scholars. One of the earliest brought with him a library of 275 volumes : it has been calculated that there were, between 1630-90, as many Oxford and Cambridge graduates in New, as in any district of the same extent in Old England. Their zeal, like that of Knox, showed itself in the establishment of the School System, which has continued to be the pride of the Northern States. It was enacted that every town of fifty families must have a common school, of one hundred families a grammar school ; and, before 1650, attendance on these, in all the original "United Colonies," was made compulsory. Meanwhile, stirred by a yet higher ambition, Massachusetts had, in 1636, from the scant State treasury of the time, voted a sum for the support of HARVARD UNIVERSITY, which, afterwards reinforced by private benefactors (Bishop Berkeley who, during his residence, wrote his *Alciphron* at Newport 1729-30, being

of the number), continued to be the foremost, as it was the first, of a series of similar foundations. YALE, near New-haven, Connecticut, followed in 1700: PRINCETON, in New Jersey, 1746. The great library of Philadelphia had been opened in 1731: the Academy, afterwards developed into the UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA, was started by Franklin in 1751: King's, now COLUMBIA COLLEGE, New York, in 1754; and that of Rhode Island, now BROWN UNIVERSITY, in 1764.[1]

The "Press" which has, in our own and other countries, long claimed to rank, as an educational instrument, above the University, and has frequently been the severe critic of its rival, developed in New England more slowly. Printing began in 1639 at New Cambridge, but under the jealous surveillance of the Church-State; and, late in the century, the appointed Neo-Dominican licensers having inconsiderately allowed the publication of the *De Imitatione Christi*, the practice of art was for a season wholly prohibited. Similarly, of the first American newspaper—a record of Public Occurrences, issued at Boston in 1690—only one number was permitted. The *News Letter*, started in the same city (1704), and the *Gazette* (1719), were more fortunate; and, in 1725, at New York, the first of a portentous brood saw the light.

But, with all their care for the regulation of thought, the American Puritans never attempted to stifle it in the bud. There is nothing in their rigid code corresponding to the aspiration of the Virginian Berkeley, or to the Carolinian penalty imposed (1740) on teaching negroes to read or write. Self-confidence or magnanimity made them per-

[1] To these foundations, which, with that of "*William and Mary*" (*v. ante*), make up the list of Colonial Colleges, were afterwards added—that of *Charleston* (1786); *Union College*, New York (the second President of which was a son of Jonathan Edwards) (1795); *Bowdoin*, Brunswick, Maine, the Alma Mater of Hawthorne and Longfellow (1800); and *South Carolina University at Columbia*, whose President, Cooper, was the great friend of Priestley (1801).

secutors of a nobler rank. It is impossible to guess what their course would have been had they foreseen the issue. It is certain that their zeal for learning, starting with the theological pretext of enabling every one of their citizens to have free access to the Scriptures, resulted in opening to their youth ample stores of secular wisdom, and to the students of their colleges the intellectual treasures of Greece and Rome, as well as of Palestine. "God make thee a good Christian and a good scholar" is the recorded prayer of a New England matron: ere the close of their second generation, the English envoy, the Earl of Bellomont, could congratulate the people that "they were not put to travel for learning, but had the Muses at their doors."[1]

The astounding accounts of the Hebrew, Latin, and Greek of seventeenth century undergraduates, require to be corrected by consideration of the slight attention then paid to graces of style, and of the infancy of Physical Science. In this latter domain, however, the colonies, before the middle of the eighteenth century, could boast such names as those of Josselyn, Wood, Winthrop the friend of Boyle, Banister the correspondent of Ray, and the Pennsylvanian Bartrams. In classical learning the leading controversialists, as Cotton, Shepard, Hooker, the erratic Ward, the philanthropic Eliot and Williams, were notable proficients. The ripest fruits of New England lore were dedicated to the service of that theology, which it would require a long life, implicit faith, and more than the patience of Job, to read through. Most of those old writers, with almost miraculous fluency of phrase, keep droning over the same themes. Their thoughts soon cease to be interesting, because they are so manifestly fettered by tradition; and their style, when not merely commonplace, is a contorted reflex of the contorted euphuistic style of English seventeenth century controversy. It is

[1] Quoted from Coit Tyler, vol. i. p. 100.

impossible for a modern critic to be enthusiastic over "the dynasty of the Mathers," who ecclesiastically governed the colony for eighty years. They were all physically and intellectually strong; producing an inordinate number of children, and a still more inordinate number of sermons; but they are nowhere sufficiently graceful or original to attract the attention of others than antiquarians. Richard, the first, famous for his big voice and majestic manner, a great bookworm and "moderator," begat Increase, who had a "tonitruous cogency in his perorations," worked sixteen hours a day, and was the author of the omnium gatherum of *Remarkable Providences.* Increase begat Cotton, "the literary behemoth," who, blown like a bladder with self-esteem and zeal, wished "to resemble a rabbi in the Talmud, whose face was black by reason of the number of his fasts" —a pedant, who, vexed with toothache, "set himself to consider how he had sinned with his teeth." Taking "Fructuosus" for his motto, "Be short" as his door-sign for visitors, he published, in one year, fourteen forgotten books; but is still remembered as the author of a tract, *Good to be Devised,* highly commended by Benjamin Franklin for its benevolent sagacity, and the *Magnalia Christi,* a ponderous work on the ecclesiastical history of New England, with biographical notices of her saints, that—with a larger bulk of inaccurate matter and rhetorical froth—may be, in respect of pious enthusiasm, compared with the more classic English works of Bede, Fuller, and Fox. Cotton begat Samuel,—as learned, but without the wit, —whose argument against the loyalists of the Revolution time, (when he is content to describe "the Tories" as "infamous scoundreis") consists mainly of abuse. With him the race died out. Belonging to the same age are a few recalcitrants, in and out of the Church, notably John Wise, who vigorously defended the laity against the pretensions of the Matherian Ultramontanism; and, writing, "The end of all good govern-

ment is to cultivate humanity," was, as "the first great American democrat, called up from his grave by the men who were getting ready for the Declaration of Independence."[1] Worthy of like mention are also Samuel Sewall, one of the first to denounce negro slavery and witch persecution; William Douglass—the Scotch immigrant Boston doctor, who stood out for "natural religion;" and Livingston, the New York lawyer, afterwards statesman, who published a travesty of the Thirty-nine Articles, in the interests of Free Thought. But these few rebellious pages were like the mutterings of a storm that, for the time, passes with a threat. Nothing like a fixed idea of religious liberty had got abroad in America, till near the close of the eighteenth century, the first half of which is filled with the fame of a man who gathered into a focus, made brighter or fiercer by his power, the learning, the faith, and the fanaticism of the preceding generations.

JONATHAN EDWARDS, born in Connecticut, 1703, began preaching at New York in 1723, and died in 1758, as President of New Jersey College, leaving a name at which the free-thinking world of his age and nation grew pale. It were mere flippancy, in the course of a brief literary survey, to discuss the abstract metaphysics of the treatise on the Will, on which his fame mainly depends. Brown and Mill show how his premises may be accepted without their practical conclusions: Kant, Fichte, Maine de Biran, and Jouffroy how the premises themselves may be disputed. The reputation of Edwards has been exalted by Chalmers, who calls him "the greatest of theologians;" by Mackintosh, who says that "for power of subtle argument he was unmatched;" still more by an American critic, who, with the exaggeration of hero-worship, proclaims him to have been "not inferior to Bacon," and "the first man of the world" during the second quarter of a century emblazoned by the genius of Rousseau, Frederick

[1] Tyler, vol. ii. p. 116.

II., and Voltaire. But he surpassed his American predecessors in the incisiveness of his thought, and in the grace of a style that has got wholly rid of the affected conceits and pedantries of his age.

Edwards is remarkable in many respects;—for the extraordinary precocity which, at the age of twelve, showed itself in a schoolboy's letter against the doctrine of the materiality of the soul; for his minute observation, not much later, of external, especially insect, nature, in his paper on the habits of spiders; for his general scholarship, for the clear vigour of his logical thought, for his singular lucidity of expression, magnetic force of persuasion, and his simple, unassuming, gentle life. The facts relating to the last, one of struggle against physical weakness, trouble, and penury, borne with Christian resignation and carried on with enduring purpose, is one of the numerous instances of pleasant surprise, which help to countervail others of grievous disappointment, we meet with in the biographies of eminent men; for next to his reputation as a metaphysician is that he holds as a terrorist among preachers. No Hooker or Mather in the New, or Torquemada in the Old World, more ruthlessly pressed home to his hearers the idea of the Juggernaut whom he worshipped under the name of an all-merciful God. The following passage is a specimen of his pulpit oratory :—

"The God that holds you over the pit of hell, much as one holds a spider or some loathsome insect over the fire, abhors you, and is dreadfully provoked; He looks upon you as worthy of nothing else but to be cast into the fire. . . . You are ten thousand times more abominable in His eyes than the most hateful venomous serpent is in ours. You hang by a slender thread, with the flames of divine wrath flashing about it, and ready every moment to singe it and burn it asunder. If you cry to God to pity you, He will be so far from pitying you in your doleful case, or showing you the least regard or favour, that instead of that He will only tread you under foot, and though He will know that you cannot bear the weight of omnipotence treading upon you, He will not regard that; but He will crush you under His feet without mercy; He will crush out your blood and make it fly, and

it shall be sprinkled on His garments, so as to stain all His raiment. He will not only hate you, but He will have you in the utmost contempt; no place shall be thought fit for you but under His feet, to be trodden down as the mire of the streets."

The logical defect of this is that, according to his logic, it could have no effect; the practical, that hardly any one can now believe it: but such was the force of the preacher's earnest though quiet delivery, that it burned through his hearers like hot iron. The whole congregation groaned, the women went into wild hysterics, and the men shivered under "the fury of its power." Whether, in a rude age and rough land, this habit of holding people and shaking them over the pit was more for good or ill were hard to say. In any case it is pleasant to leave this intellectual phenomenon, who was also prone to dwell on "sweetness and beauty," with this description of his future wife.

"They say there is a young lady in Newhaven who is beloved of that Great Being who made and rules the world, and that there are certain seasons in which this Great Being, in some way or other invisible, comes to her and fills her mind with exceeding sweet delight, and that she hardly cares for anything except to meditate on Him; that she expects, after a while, to be received up where He is, to be raised up out of the world and caught up into heaven, being assured that He loves her too well to let her remain at a distance from Him always. There she is to dwell with Him, and to be ravished with His love and delight for ever. Therefore, if you present all the world before her, with the richest of its treasures, she disregards it and cares not for it, and is unmindful of any pain or affection. She has a strange sweetness in her mind, and singular purity in her affections; is most just and conscientious in all her conduct; and you could not persuade her to do anything wrong or sinful, if you would give her all the world, lest she should offend this Great Being. She is of a wonderful sweetness, calmness, and universal benevolence of mind, especially after this Great God has manifested Himself to her mind. She will sometimes go about from place to place, singing sweetly, and seems to be always full of joy and pleasure, and no one knows for what. She loves to be alone, walking in the fields and groves, and seems to have some one invisible always conversing with her."

Edwards remains the most salient advocate of Ultra-Calvinism: he is remarkable as an example of the aftermath

of English Puritanism over the sea; a posthumous preacher of the Ironsides, equally far removed from his contemporaries of Queen Anne as from the Cavaliers themselves. But he further impressed on his country's literature the stern thought and intense religiousness which those furthest from him in details of creed have been, in our own generation, proud to derive from their New England ancestors.

The work of Edwards is the last word of pure Colonial Puritan prose. Of the verse of the period there is little to say. From an artistic point of view, there was a famine in the land, and cacophonous jingle passed for poetry. The old New Englanders, with few exceptions, holding that whatever was godly was severe, whatever was pleasant was of Belial, cultivated the grim to the exclusion of the beautiful. But many of the saints were smitten with a mania for rhyming as inveterate as that of sinners for gambling. "In the first period," says Mr. Tyler, "neither advanced age, nor high office, nor mental unfitness, nor previous respectability, were sufficient to protect any one from the poetic vice. We hear of venerable men, like Peter Bulkley, continuing to lapse into it when far beyond the grand climacteric. The earthly element, the passion the carnal taint . . . that in other men works itself off in a pleasure-journey, in a flirtation, in going to the play or in a convivial bout, did, in these venerable men, exhaust itself in the sly dissipation of writing verses." The historian quoted is, nevertheless, able to admire some of these products. I can find none among them that have any justification for their existence. The Muses—according to Daniel, "such coy things that they care not for kings"—would not listen to the rough wooing of inquisitors, who, after abusing them in public, strove to gain access to their private ears: the results of their illicit liaisons remain in some ghoulish imaginations over tombstones, acrostic puns which Crashaw or Donne, in their most fantastic moods, would have disowned,

and a chaos of dissonance, like that of a cracked dinner-bell behind their theologic carts.

Setting aside Morell's English version of his Latin *Nova Anglia*, as the work of a mere visitor, the earliest verse that really claims to be American is a doggerel list, by an anonymous author, of New England's annoyances, which, if we remember the date, 1630. *i.e.*, a generation after Spenser had celebrated "the Indian Peru" in his *Faërie Queene*, will strengthen our impression of the backwoodsman's want of leisure for polishing his stanza :—

> "The place where we live is a wilderness wood,
> Where grass is much wanting that's fruitful and good.
> . . . . . .
> If fresh meat be wanting to fill up our dish,
> We have carrots, and pumpkins, and turnips, and fish.
> We have pumpkins at morning and pumpkins at noon.
> If it was not for pumpkins we should be undone."

Ten years later we have *The Bay Psalm Book* — results of the laborious efforts of several saints—among them the good Eliot—the worst of many bad translations of the sublimest series of lyrics in any tongue, worse than that of Sternhold and Hopkins, or that which still every Sunday helps to maim the ears and mar the taste of Presbyterian Scotland. After a decade of merciful silence, Mrs. Anne Bradstreet, introduced by a flourish of trumpets, confronts us. The title of her book, *The Tenth Muse lately sprung up in America*, belies her natural modesty, which, we are assured, was great. But it might have spared us *The Four Elements*, some lines in which seem like a bad parody of Lucretius, and *The Four Monarchies*, which affronts the memory of Sir David Lyndsay The prose meditations of the same excellent lady, who has the rare merit of being a temperate advocate of woman's rights, are passable; but they more frequently recall the platitudes of Feltham's *Resolves* than the vigorous aphorisms of Quarles; and her minor verses, softened, as they

occasionally are, by the flow of the Merrimac near her Andover home, have been commended for sweetness and light by the bitter darkness of their company. The best seem alternate echoes of Spenser and of Herbert. The following, *To her Husband*, on expectation, fortunately unfulfilled, of her own decease, are selected by Mr. W. M. Rossetti :—

> " How soon, my dear, death may my steps attend ;
> How soon't may be thy lot to lose thy friend,
> We both are ignorant. Yet, love bids me
> These farewell lines to recommend to thee,
> That, when that knot's untied that made us one,
> I may seem thine, that in effect am none.
> And, if I see not half my days that's due,
> What nature would, God grant to yours and you ! "

Mrs. Bradstreet's death was bewailed by two ardent necrologists, Norton and Rogers. The former seems to have read Occleve on Chaucer, Waller and Dryden on Cromwell : the latter is an evident student of *The Tears of the Muses ;* a remark equally applicable to Uriah Oakes, in the elegy on his friend Shepard of Charleston. The closing couplet of one of the stanzas of this writer—extolled as having reached the highest point touched by American poetry during his era—

> " Ah ! wit avails not, when the heart's like to break ;
> Great griefs are tongue-tied when the lesser speak "—

recalls the quatrain of Raleigh—

> " Passions are likened best to floods and streams ;
> The shallow murmur, but the deep are dumb :
> So when affections yield discourse, it seems
> The bottom is but shallow whence they come."

Peter Folger next merits mention, as the maternal grandfather of Franklin, and a stout advocate of tolerance. The sins of his rhyme, which are many, should be pardoned, for the sake of his protests—albeit in terrible psalmodic doggerel —against " the sin of persecution." While he was tumbling, with good intent, in his cap and bells, Benjamin Thomson, in

New England's Crisis, was growling, and, in the *rôle* of a satirist, already complaining of national degeneracy, since—

> "The times wherein old Pompion was a saint
> When men fared hardly, yet without complaint,
> On vilest cates; the dainty Indian-maize
> Was eat with clamp shells out of wooden trayes,
> Under thatched huts, without the cry of rent
> And the best sauce to every dish, content.
> . . . . . .
> 'Twas long before spiders and worms had drawn
> Their dingy webs, or hid with cheating lawne
> New England's beautys, which still seemed to me
> Illustrious in their own simplicity.
> . . . . . .
> Ere wines from France and Muscavadoe, too,
> Without the which the drink will scarcely doe,
> From western isles, ere fruits and delicacies
> Did rot maids' teeth and spoil their handsome faces."

Thomson's latest critic grows indignant over the "easy and stale lie" which exalts the past over the present; the reverse process, quite as easy, being more stale in America. But there is reason to be angry at his verse, which hardly deserves to be called a parody of Dryden's. Passing Joseph Green's attempts at Hudibrastic humour, Francis Knapp's *Reasons against Restraining Poetasters*, — a strong reason for it, — and the heroics of John Mayhew, with the lines :—

> "Tremendous Fate, by turns, incessant flies,
> While the black sulphur clouds the azure skies,
> And ghastly savages, with fearful yell,
> Invoke their kindred of profoundest hell"—

we come to Michael Wigglesworth, in matter and manner, the most detestable rhymester who ever achieved a reputation. It is calculated that his *Day of Doom* was the most popular and widely-read book in America, previous to the Revolution. The style of this work, on which Pollok's

Course of Time is an improvement, may be illustrated by the following verse on the wicked at the bar—

"With dismal chains and strongest reins,
Like prisoners of hell,
They're held in place before Christ's face,
Till He their doom shall tell.
These void of tears, but filled with fears,
And dreadful expectation,
Of endless pains and scalding flames,
Stand waiting for damnation."

Its theology is paraded in the answer given to those who "died in infancy," and plead that they "never had or good or bad effected personally, but from the womb unto the tomb were straightway carried"—

"You sinners are; and such a share
As sinners may expect
Such you shall have, for I do save
None but Mine own elect.
Yet, to compare your sin with their,
Who lived a longer time,
I do confess, yours is much less,
Though every sin's a crime.
A crime it is; therefore in bliss
You may not hope to dwell,
But unto you I shall allow
The easiest room in hell."

There is much more similar rubbish and woeful wit, the worst, perhaps, being the execrable puns of Nicholas Noyes on a friend dying of the stone. The Dutch of that age are said to have offered to their prisoners of war three alternatives —to be hanged from one of their mast-heads, to be drowned in one of their canals, or to learn their language: after trial of the last, the unfortunates were reduced to prefer either of the other two. The New England Puritans might, with like result, have submitted the mock-merciful choice of reading their verses. For them to be poets, save to the mutual admiration of their preposterous panegyrics,

"Non homines, non Di, non concessere columnæ."

The spirit of consistent Puritanism—that which arraigned Milton for his *Doctrine of Divorce*, and would have denounced his posthumous *De Doctrina Christiana* as a sheaf of heresies—has never produced a poet, save Bunyan in prose. But it was a spirit essential, in countercheck of its opposite, to the civilisation of the world; and, in the long run, better fruit has grown from the hearts of oak that manned the northern colonies than from the gay Virginian cavaliers. Out of the lion came honey, and the force of character that from the first made the people strong at last made them free. It was in a comparatively barren soil, and under the conditions of an iron creed, that the "stern men with empires in their brains"—with hard hands and heads for this world's work, and a steady gaze on an ideal—men unenlightened, but also undistracted, by "speculations" either of Concord or Wall Street, content to do honest work for honest wages, who never feared the face of their fellows, but lived ever in the fear of their Faith,—it was there and thus that they planted deep the seed of a tree whose branches were to overshadow a continent.

CHAPTER III.

THE REVOLUTION PERIOD.

THE time was approaching when the common interests, fears, and hopes of an external strife were to do for Anglo-America what the Persian wars did temporarily for the Hellenes, and the struggle of the Plantagenets with the Capets more permanently effected for Saxon and Norman England; it was to weld the scattered States into a Nation. With this unity, however imperfect—no longer with Virginia or New Jersey or Connecticut—we have henceforth to deal. We pass from the one period to the other by the bridge of a great memory, that of the first American known over Europe, who, as a writer, a man of science, and a statesman, has achieved three reputations, each by itself enough to have made him famous. A slightly junior contemporary of Edwards, BENJAMIN FRANKLIN (born at Boston 1706; died at Philadelphia 1790), the exponent *κατ' ἐξοχήν* of the other, that is the secular, side of the colonial life, was destined to see the close of the first, and play a prominent part in opening the second era of his country's history. As long as Utilitarian philosophy endures, his will be a name to conjure with. His *Autobiography*—on the stirring details of which we cannot dwell—is as romantic as the life of an unromantic person can be. The incidents of the young candle-moulder; the printer's apprentice; the writer and ballad-monger—dutifully and duly discouraged by the

wise paternal criticism, "verse-makers are generally beggars," —the runaway, eating rolls on the Philadelphian street, encountering his future *fiancée*, and sleeping on the benches of a Quaker meeting-house; his struggling life in London with Ralph of *Dunciad* notoriety—

> "Silence, ye wolves, while Ralph to Cynthia howls,
> And makes *night* hideous; answer him, ye owls!"

Franklin's amorous rivalry with the poetaster; his return, "correcting the erratum" of his infidelities by marriage with his old Pennsylvanian friend; his success as a printer, economist, and diplomatist; his triumphs in natural and political philosophy, clenched in Turgot's line (adapted from Manilius), "Eripuit cœlo fulmen, sceptrumque tyrannis;" his deputation to England and examination before the House of Commons, resulting in the admiring wonder of Chatham, and the repeal of the Stamp Act; his signature of the Declaration of Independence; his ministry in France, and avatar with Voltaire, who said, "Je n'ai pû résister au désir de parler un moment la langue de Franklin;" the acclamations of shouting multitudes on his return home; Mirabeau's announcement of the patriarch's death,—"The genius which has freed America and poured a flood of light over Europe has returned to the bosom of the Divinity"—these, or most of these, incidents are elementary facts of schoolboy history. They are the records of the main stages of the greatest success achieved in modern times, by the sheer force of common sense, integrity, and industry indomitable. Franklin's experiments and discoveries form a notable chapter in the special history of physical science; but half of his fame, even in this field, is due to the precision and clearness of the manner in which they are announced. "The most profound observations," says Lord Jeffrey, "are suggested by him as if they were the most obvious and natural way of accounting for phenomena." The same literary merit characterises the financial pamphlets and

treatises that first brought him into celebrity. Both are marked by the same spirit, the love of the useful, which was his passion through life. Franklin follows Bacon, to an extreme, opposed to that of the Platonists, in decrying abstractions. Archytas is said to have apologised for inventing the arch: Franklin is ashamed to have wasted time over pure mathematics in his "Magical Squares." Though endowed with as little as possible, for a great man, of "the faculty divine," there are passages in his writings that connect them with the developement of imaginative writing in his country. To carry out his aim, which is everywhere to bring down philosophy, like the lightning, from heaven to earth, "illustrans commoda vitæ," he has to popularise his ethics—those of Confucius and the Seven Sages, modified by the experience and the circumstances of a later age—and frequently to throw them into dramatic form. The most famous of popular annuals, *Poor Richard's Almanack*, in which for twenty-five years its readers—rising to the number of 10,000—were taught "the way to be healthy and wealthy and wise," abounds in terse apothegms and smart sayings, incisive paragraphs of prose and rhyme, rendered attractive by a vein of quaint humour, and the homely illustrations always acceptable to the countrymen of the writer. Let us take the following from shoals of instances, half quoted half invented for the occasion:—

"One to-day is worth two to-morrows." "Handle your tools without mittens; the cat in gloves catches no mice." "Little strokes fell large oaks." "Fly pleasures and they will follow you." "Laziness travels so slowly that poverty soon overtakes him." "Trusting too much to others' care is the ruin of many; for in this world men are saved not by faith, but by the want of it. If you would have a faithful servant and one that you like, serve yourself." "A fat kitten makes a lean will." "Who dainties love shall beggars prove." "What maintains one vice will bring up two children." "Silks and satins put out the fire." "Fools make feasts and wise men eat them." "A small leak will sink a great ship." "A ploughman on his legs is better than a gentleman on his knees." "Pride break-

fasted with plenty, dined with poverty, and supped with infamy." "It is as truly folly for the poor to ape the rich as for the frog to swell in order to equal the ox."

> "Vessels large may venture more,
> But little boats should keep near shore."

"If you would know the value of money, go and try to borrow some, for he that goes a-borrowing goes a-sorrowing."[1] "Creditors have good memories; they are a superstitious sect, great observers of set days and times." "Those have a short Lent who owe money to be paid at Easter."

These and many more quotations father Abraham pours forth in a brief discourse, at the close of which, says poor Richard—

"I found the good man had thoroughly studied my almanacks. The frequent mention he made of me must have tired anybody else, but I was wonderfully delighted with it, though conscious that the wisdom he ascribed to me was rather the gleanings I had made of the sense of all ages and nations. However, I resolved to be the better for the echo of it; and though I had first determined to buy stuff for a new coat, I went away resolved to wear my old one a little longer. Reader, if thou wilt do the same thy profit will be as great as mine."

These maxims all convey advice eminently excellent to the citizens of the most munificent and extravagant nation of the civilised world; but it is as far away from St. Francis as from Theocritus, from Jonathan Edwards as from Shelley. Franklin had definitely broken with the theologians, whose webs were spun too thin to bind the bulk of his massive manhood: on the other hand, he had in boyhood bade good-bye to the rhyming crew, and his opinion of their spendthrift race is clenched in one of several stanzas on various sorts of paper—

> "What are the poets, take them as they fall,
> Good, bad, rich, poor, much read, not read at all?
> Them and their works in the same class you'll find,
> They are the mere waste-paper of mankind."

Of a somewhat later date, the following more consecutive

[1] Compare the advices of Sir Walter Raleigh and Lord Burleigh to their sons; also, of course, "Polonius."

piece is inspired by the same quaint worldly wisdom, and almost deification of "Thrift."

"When I was a child of seven years old, my friend, on a holiday, filled my pocket with coppers. I went directly to a shop where they sold toys for children, and, being charmed with the sound of a *whistle* that I met, by the way, in the hands of another boy, I voluntarily offered and gave all my money for one. I then came home, and went whistling all over the house, much pleased with my *whistle*, but disturbing all the family. My brothers, and sisters, and cousins, understanding the bargain I had made, told me I had given four times as much for it as it was worth, put me in mind what good things I might have bought with the rest of the money, and laughed at me so much for my folly that I cried with vexation, and the reflection gave me more chagrin than the *whistle* gave me pleasure.

"This, however, was afterwards of use to me, the impression continuing on my mind, so that often, when I was tempted to buy some unnecessary thing, I said to myself, '*Don't give too much for the whistle*,' and I saved my money. As I grew up, came into the world, and observed the actions of men, I thought I met with many, very many, who *gave too much for the whistle*.

"When I saw one too ambitious of Court favour, sacrificing his time on attendance on levees, his repose, his liberty, his virtue, and perhaps his friend, to attain it, I have said to myself, '*This man gives too much for his whistle*.'

"When I saw another fond of popularity, constantly employing himself in political bustles, neglecting his own affairs, and ruining them by that neglect, '*He pays, indeed*,' said I, '*too much for his whistle*.'

"If I knew a miser, who gave up every kind of comfortable living, all the pleasure of doing good to others, all the esteem of his fellow-citizens, and the joys of benevolent friendship for the sake of accumulating wealth, '*Poor man*,' said I, '*you pay too much for your whistle*.'

"If I see one fond of appearance, or fine clothes, fine houses, fine furniture, fine equipages, all above his fortune, for which he contracts debts and ends his career in a prison, '*Alas!*' say I, '*he has paid dear, very dear, for his whistle*.'

"When I see a beautiful, sweet-tempered girl married to an ill-natured brute of a husband, '*What a pity*,' say I, '*that she should pay so much for her whistle!*'

"In short, I conceive that great part of the miseries of mankind are brought upon them by the false estimates they have made of the value of things, and by their *giving too much for their whistles*."

In his green old age, Franklin was smitten or blessed by the aftermath of sentiment that often marks a fine sunset: among our most agreeable reminiscences of him are the

love letters and compliments sent, from his retreat at Passy, to the fair Parisian, the widow of Helvetius. In one he tells her that he had seen a vision of his late wife and the philosopher married in the Elysian fields, and that, on his attempting to reclaim Mrs. Franklin, she answered: "I was a good wife to you for forty-nine years and four months—nearly half a century: let that content you. I have formed a new connection here, which will last to eternity." "Indignant," adds the wily septuagenarian, in a strain worthy of Congreve, "at this refusal of my Eurydice, I resolved to quit these ungrateful shades and return to this good world again to behold the sun and you. Here I am; *let us avenge ourselves.*" But in these letters—as in another series to Madame Brillon, his "ever amiable Brilliante"—there is the same under-current of sound ground-sense. The following recommendation on playing chess, especially addressed to American ladies, still holds good:—

> "*Thirdly*, it teaches *caution*, not to make our moves too hastily. This habit is best acquired by observing strictly the laws of the game, such as, '*If you touch a piece you must move it somewhere; if you set it down you must let it stand;*' and it is therefore best that these rules should be observed, as the game thereby becomes more the image of human life, and particularly of war, in which, if you have incautiously put yourself into a bad and dangerous position, you cannot obtain your enemies' leave to withdraw your troops and place them more securely, but you must abide all the consequences of your rashness."

Franklin never wrote a word of nonsense, and he remains the most considerate and practical of philosophers in the most practical, although one of the most impulsive, of nations.

Wordsworth's dictum, "Poetry is the outcome of emotion recollected in tranquillity," applies, with less exception, to artistic prose. Many of the ballads, and most of the war-lyrics of the world, have been the products of stress and strife. The greatest Greek plays were written under the shadow of the most critical conflict of the East and West.

Nævius was the spectator, as well as the historian, of the first, Ennius of the second, Punic War: Körner held the sword in his right hand, the lyre in his left. Neither the *Mariners of England*, nor the *Marseillaise*, nor Coleridge's *Ode to France*, nor Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*, nor Longfellow's *Wreck of the Cumberland*, nor the bursts of patriotic fervour which elevate far above the region of burlesque the best of the *Biglow Papers*, were composed in tranquillity. But when the cannon are sounding on the field, and the debate is surging in the senate, the essayist and the romancer are dumb. The American Revolution, at all events, supports the assertion that periods of political crisis are more favourable to the preparation than to the actual production of literature. The demands of instant action cast the reflective powers into abeyance: a stormy era is the seed-time of a later harvest. There is only one exercise of the imagination that it directly stimulates, that of the orator, and the conditions of his success, save in a few instances, make a drain on his posthumous reputation. In reading even the greatest speeches of the Past, divested of the living presence which gave them colour and force, we find it difficult to account for the effect they are known to have produced. The influence of great talkers like Christopher North, of great preachers like Hall, Chalmers, Irving, is already to us perplexing. Few can read the harangues, once battle-cries, of Fox or Pitt; and, to a future generation, those of the most domineering of recent English statesmen, will probably be remarkable mainly for the intricacy of their sentences, and the subtlety of their evasions. Similarly evanescent has been the fame of most of the great orators of the American Revolution. The bulk of the speeches that thrilled their listeners have faded into old men's chimney-corner memories, or they remain as the ashes and fossils of genius. The greatest, next to Washington, of the creative spirits of the

era, Alexander Hamilton, first, at the age of seventeen, amazed his American audience by a speech in which he foretold "that the waves of rebellion, sparkling with fire," would "from the New World wash back to England the wrecks of her wealth and power;" but it remains as a precocious incident in a brilliant career. The triumphs of Patrick Henry, who "wielded at will" that young "Democraty," are commemorated in the judicious biography of Wirt, but few of his orations are accurately preserved.

The following passage, from a fragment of his address to the Virginia Convention of 1775, is a specimen of his warrior style :—

"I have but one lamp by which my feet are guided, and that is the lamp of experience. I know of no way of judging the future but by the past. And, judging by the past, I wish to know what there has been in the conduct of the British Ministry to justify those hopes with which gentlemen have been pleased to solace themselves? Is it that insidious smile with which our petition has been lately received? Trust it not, sir; it will prove a snare to your feet. Suffer not yourselves to be betrayed with a kiss. Ask yourselves how this gracious reception comports with those warlike preparations which cover our waters and darken our land. Are fleets and armies necessary to a work of love and reconciliation? These are the implements of war and subjugation, the last arguments to which kings resort. . . . Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston. The war is inevitable, and let it come . . . Gentlemen may cry, peace, peace—but there is no peace . . . The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms . . . Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the cost of chains and slavery?[1] Forbid it, almighty God! I know not what course others may take, but as for me, give me liberty or give me death."

In a similar spirit and style are the orations of Joseph Warren and John Hancock, on the anniversary of the Boston Massacre, and the speech of James Wilson in the Pennsylvania Convention. Of the harangues of James Otis, compared by his contemporaries to "flames of fire," we have only a tradition, though his pamphlet, *A Declaration of the Conduct*

[1] The date of Burns' *Scots wha hae* is 1793.

(1762) *of the House of Representatives*, has been maintained to be the germ of the Declaration of Independence. Richard Henry Lee, saluted as the "American Cicero," has only handed down to us his eloquent "Address (1775) of the Twelve United Colonies."

The master minds of the new era were the soldiers, diplomatists, statesmen, and jurists, who fought for the free soil, sank the deep foundations, and reared the superstructure of the new commonwealth. In civil, as well as literary, history we have often occasion to remark that great men come in clusters: a stirring crisis fills the air with an electric excitement, and the energy evoked in one actor, by the demands of the time, inspires his peers, as by a contagious stimulus, to put forth their powers. This fact was equally apparent in the American, and in, its near successor, the French Revolution: but in the former the struggle with external force preceded, instead of following, internal difficulties; the tasks of the warrior and the legislator more frequently devolved upon the same persons. Washington, as Commander-in-Chief, was hardly more illustrious than Washington as twice-elected President: in both capacities he was *Pater Patriæ*. Hamilton, his right arm in the field, was his *alter ego* in the Senate. Between the two epochs of the new birth of America there is the same difference as appeared in France; but they are chronologically reversed. In the case of the latter, the attack of the allied monarchs merged all parties in defence of a common cause: in the former, the triumph of the common cause allowed the schism of party to appear. Setting aside a comparatively insignificant faction of royalists, there was no difference of opinion about the injustice of the Stamp Act (1765); Franklin was sent to England for its repeal, as a representative of the nation: in defiance of Townshend's Tax, the tea was (1773) thrown into Boston Harbour, with equal approbation from

Virginia and New York, while the cry was, *Pro aris et focis;* all were for the State. The "Declaration of Rights" (1774) was, at the first Philadelphian Congress, unanimously accepted; but already in the discussions about the famous Declaration of Independence (1776)—mainly drawn up by the man of the age who ranks next in genius to the three above named, Thomas Jefferson—there was a divergence. It is insufficiently known in England that, in its first draft, there appeared the following paragraph, certainly the most interesting suppressed passage in American Literature :—

> "He" (the prisoner then at the bar of Western opinion) "has waged cruel war against human nature itself, violating its most sacred rights of life and liberty, in the persons of a distant people who never offended him, captivating and carrying them into slavery in another hemisphere, or to incur miserable death in their transportation thither. This piratical warfare, the opprobrium of infidel powers, is the warfare of the Christian king of Great Britain. Determined to keep open a market where men should be bought and sold, he has prostituted his negative (*veto*) by suppressing every legislative attempt to restrain this execrable commerce. And, that this assemblage of horrors might want no fact of distinguished dye, he is now exciting those very people to rise in arms against us, and purchase that liberty of which he deprived them, by murdering the people upon whom he obtruded them; thus paying off former crimes committed against the liberties of one people by crimes which he urges them to commit against the lives of another."

This, the most eloquent clause of that great document, worthy of Cicero against Verres, was struck out in deference to the already ominous interests of the South, but it was strictly true. There are few stages in the spread of American slavery, from Queen Elizabeth's partnership with the buccaneer Hawkins, in 1562, to the present Premier's characteristically rash congratulation of Jefferson Davis, in 1864, that Englishmen can afford to contemplate without shame. It was, as we have seen, in 1619, that the first negroes entered the Western continent; but it was not till 1713, when England, as one of the emblems of her supremacy over the ocean, obtained, by

the Treaty of Utrecht, the exclusive right of bringing African slaves to the West Indies and to Spanish America, that the black race, in considerable numbers, became located in those regions. The colonies disliked and strove to suppress the system; but the authorities of the mother country strenuously maintained it. A colonial tax on the importation of slaves was repealed, and, in 1749, an Act was passed declaring that the trade was "very advantageous to Great Britain," while High Church dignitaries vied with each other in proclaiming its rightfulness. In 1777, *i.e.*, at the commencement of the Revolution, one of our leading statesmen protested—"We cannot allow the colonies to check, or in any degree discourage, a traffic so beneficial to the British nation." The political evil of the "institution" was felt in the comparative paralysis of the Carolinas during the War of Independence, and most of the leaders, as Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Madison, and Adams, were opposed to it in theory, but unable, amid other pressing matters, to deal with it in practice.

The political differences already existing after the surrender of Cornwallis would have rendered any permanent basis for the Union an impossibility, had it not been for the unsurpassed practical sagacity, as well as the inventive genius, of the illustrious group of men, who, in that twilight gloom, drawing confidence from the only source open to them—their own past deeds—ventured on the experiment of laying the rafters of a new society. They had to deal at once with existing facts and with new circumstances. One great political fact was the existing Sovereignty of the States, which—whether royal, proprietory, or more strictly colonial—had joined in the war, in great measure, to maintain their right to manage their own affairs, *e.g.*, regulate their own institutions, elect their own magistrates, and impose their own taxes. Another was the democratic feeling of the Northern, the more aristocratic sentiment of the Southern, States. The differences of

race and the divergencies of interest resulting from diverse industries, which have either occasioned or aggravated the most troublesome of recent controversies, were then initial, but they already added to the difficulty. The royal or English authority, which had hitherto bound together this bundle of sticks, being removed, the problem was by what cord, and with what degree of tightness, to bind them again. No one of that age seems to have contemplated the alternative of letting them alone, and making separate bundles of north, south, and central groups. Hardly any one contemplated, and, after the irritation of a contest in which the King of England personally played so offensive a part, no one of influence dared openly to advocate, a MONARCHY. It was evident that, in deference to the separate States, the Union must be a FEDERATION, and in deference to the general sentiment that it must be a REPUBLIC. This was decided, when at the close of the war "The Articles of CONFEDERATION" were drawn and quickly accepted; for by these little more than a general brotherhood, of all but universal desire, was established. But when, in 1786, a second convention assembled at Philadelphia, with a view to "a more perfect Union," long debates ensued, and the CONSTITUTION, in its main features still that of the States, was only accepted by all the delegates in 1790. Amid a multitude of details that concern the historian of law, two paramount questions had emerged. A Federation may be more or less stringent, *i.e.* it may leave more or less liberty to its members: a Republic may be more or less Democratic. The majority of the leading minds of the Convention, of which Washington was the President, Madison the chief Director, were in little sympathy with the ultra-democratic tendencies then beginning to show themselves: the circumstance that four of the first five Presidents were Virginians—despite the fact that one of these led the counter-current—may help to explain their aristocratic leanings: their regard for the tradi-

tions and sympathy with the renown of England led them to wish to re-establish in their own a constitution similar to that of the mother-country, minus the king. The same party was naturally that of strong government: they aimed at drawing the bonds of union close, and leaving to the State authorities only the control of matters strictly municipal. These advocates of centralisation, permanent institutions, fixity of tenure in office, and graduated authority, were the party of the FEDERALISTS; among them the best and brightest men of their age and nation. WASHINGTON himself, in so far as he can be claimed by anything less than the nation, was at their head: John Marshall, Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court, one of the pilots of the State, who left a stainless name, and laid down the first principles of that international Code afterwards elaborated by Wheaton; John Adams the second; Madison the fourth, President; and John Jay (one of the signatories of the Peace), of whom it was said, "the ermine of the judicial robe, when it fell on his shoulders, touched nothing as spotless as himself"—were of their number.

Of this party, however, the real leader was ALEXANDER HAMILTON. Of Scotch descent, born in the West India island of Nevis, and settling on the Continent shortly before the outbreak of the war, this brilliant speaker, excellent writer, and masterly statesman has been more appreciated by cultivated critics and philosophical politicians than by the bulk of a nation, the dangers of whose future he, perhaps more than any of his time, foresaw, and strove in vain to resist. During the war he was Washington's "most confidential aid:" afterwards, as Secretary of the Treasury, he became the greatest of American financiers. "He smote the rock," wrote Daniel Webster, in his famous panegyric, "of the national resources, and abundant streams of revenue gushed forth. He touched the dead corpse of the public credit, and it sprang upon its feet." Prince Talleyrand said, "that among the leading men

of the time, he had never known his equal;" and Guizot, in paying tribute to his memory, "He must be classed among the men who have best known the vital principles and fundamental conditions of a government worthy of its name and mission." Hamilton did not merely mistrust, he hated a proletariate democracy. He had to acquiesce in the terms of a Constitution, inevitably a compromise between conflicting tendencies,—a compromise which left State Rights to be mainly represented by the Senate, which made the popular House of Representatives a bulwark of Central government, established a Supreme court, a National bank, and which, by the Presidential veto, made the consent of three-fourths of the Legislature essential to any important change.[1] On doubtful points he fought consistently for his view, challenging for Congress the power to enact general tariffs, endeavouring to narrow the functions of officers, as those of State Judges, dependent on the popular will, and to strengthen on all sides the Supreme Administration. It is idle to speculate on what "might have been;" but we may be permitted to conjecture that, had Hamilton lived, many of the evils which it has taxed the vitality of the States to survive, and others of equal magnitude, against which they still are struggling, would have been averted or mitigated. But when he fell, in a half-personal, half-political quarrel, in his thirty-fifth year (1804), by the bullet of the infamous demagogue Aaron Burr, a blow was dealt to Western civilisation, only less vital and lasting than to that of Scotland by the assassination of the greatest of the Stuart kings; for Hamilton had no worthy successor, and the victory lay henceforth with the unscrupulous man of genius who, without serious let or hindrance, assumed the control of the national destinies.

Washington himself claims direct personal recognition in the field of letters only by his clear and incisive, though

[1] *V.* Note on Constitution at end of volume.

seldom highly-polished, correspondence; for his celebrated *Farewell Address* is understood to have been mainly the joint work of himself, Madison, and Jay. Hamilton, who also contributed to it, displayed abilities that would have in more "piping times" have made him eminent as an author. His contributions—about three-fourths of the whole—to the *Federalist*, the organ of his party, are marked, as were all his papers and speeches, by originality of thought, breadth of view, and purity of style. Of his numerous historical sketches, the most celebrated is his letter to Colonel Laurens, giving an account of the fate of Major André, in which refinement of feeling and inflexible impartiality of view are alike conspicuous.

"Never perhaps did any man suffer death with more justice or deserve it less. The character I have given of him is drawn partly from what I saw of him myself, and partly from information. I am aware that a man of real merit is never seen in so favourable a light as through the medium of adversity: the clouds that surround him are shades that set off his good qualities. Misfortune cuts down the little vanities that in prosperous times serve as so many spots in his virtues, and gives a tone of humility that makes his worth more amiable. His spectators, who enjoy a happier lot, are less prone to detract from it through envy, and are more disposed by compassion to give him the credit he deserves, and perhaps even to magnify it."

The orator of the Federalists, Fisher Ames, has been by his countrymen intellectually associated with Burke. The points of contact seem to be that both were in constant dread of the excesses of democracy, which they were, in both cases, led to anticipate by the horrors of the French Revolution; and that both were regarded as renegades by their more pronounced associates. Ames was a man of culture, of considerable insight into real dangers, whose style has conspicuously one element of excellence—it is thoughtful and not too cautious, incisive without being reckless. In view of some of the later developments of the American Press, which, says Mr. Trollope, is "not only slanderous but dull," we may

commit ourselves to the expression of some sympathy with the following reflections of the accomplished and eloquent reactionary :—

"Intellectual superiority is so far from conciliating confidence that it is the very spirit of a democracy to proscribe the aristocracy of talents. To be the favourite of an ignorant multitude a man must descend to their level . . . he must yield to their prejudices, and substitute them for principles. Instead of enlightening their errors . . . he must furnish the sophistry that will propagate and defend them.

"The Press is the prostituted companion of liberty, and somehow or other, we know not how, its efficient auxiliary. It follows the substance like its shade ; but while a man walks erect he may observe that his shadow is almost always in the dirt. . . . It would be easy to enlarge on its evils. They are in England, they are here, they are everywhere. It is a precious pest and a necessary mischief, and there would be no liberty without it.

"It is not by destroying tyrants that we are to extinguish tyranny ; Nature is not thus to be exhausted of her power to produce them. The soil of a republic sprouts with the rankest fertility : it has been sown with dragons' teeth. To lessen the hopes of usurping demagogues we must enlighten, animate, and combine the spirit of freemen ; we must fortify and guard the constitutional ramparts about liberty. When its friends become indolent or disheartened it is no longer of any importance how long-lived are its enemies : they will prove immortal."

Ames continued to take a prominent part in public affairs during the last years of the century, and in 1796 made perhaps his most brilliant political speech in defence of the policy of his party, which preferred a British to a French alliance. Twice, before his death (in 1808), he was drawn from his retirement to pronounce the best of many encomiums on the two greatest of his compatriots. From these we may select the following as characteristic sentences :—

"The unambitious life of Washington, declining fame yet courted by it, seemed like the Ohio to choose its long way through solitudes diffusing fertility ; or like his own Potomac widening and deepening his channel as he approaches the sea, and displaying most the serenity of his greatest towards the end of his course."

Again,

"The tears that flow on this recital will never dry up. My heart,

penetrated with the remembrance of the man, grows liquid as I write . . . I could weep too for my country, which, mournful as it is, does not know the half of its loss. It deeply laments when it turns its eyes back and sees what Hamilton was; but my soul stiffens with despair when I think what Hamilton would have been. . . . It is not as Apollo, enchanting the shepherds with his lyre, that we deplore him: it is as Hercules, treacherously slain in the midst of his unfinished labours, leaving the world overrun with monsters."

The great antagonist of the Federals is one of the most conspicuous figures in American history. THOMAS JEFFERSON (1743-1826) is the representative in chief of the iconoclastic spirit of his age and nation. While his rivals stood firmly on the defensive against the encroachments of an arbitrary government, his desire, in politics as in speculation, was to break with the past. Inspired by Patrick Henry's denunciations of the Stamp Act, he became prominent, in 1769, as a member of the Virginian Assembly. In 1776, the main responsibility of drawing up the "Declaration of Independence" fell on him. He subsequently spent six years in or near Paris, as Minister of Congress, and brought back, from his residence, an admiration for those phases of the French Revolution from which the more temperate judgments of Hamilton and Ames and Adams had recoiled. He threw himself heart and soul into the arms of the Democratic party, and, in the constitutional struggle that ensued, his keener sense of the direction in which popular sympathies were tending, gave him the ascendency over the wider knowledge and more far-seeing intellects of his adversaries. Jefferson was the Danton of the West; but his forte lay not so much in oratory as in political management. More perhaps than any other statesman of his age, he aspired to be an author, to which title the most vivacious pages of his *Notes on Virginia*, conspicuously his graphic description of the passage of the Potomac through the Blue Ridge, his *Autobiography* and *Correspondence*, give him a fair claim. His sketches of continental society, though bearing the mark of a somewhat

superficial study of French models, and marred by eighteenth-century mannerism, are lively; and his occasional flights of fancy, as in the *Dialogue between the Head and the Heart*, at least ingenious. The latter, in accord with the fashionable sentimentalism of the time, of course gets the advantage, as in the following retort on her adversary:—

"Grief with such a comfort (companionship) is almost a luxury. In a life where we are perpetually exposed to accident yours is a wonderful proposition—to insulate ourselves, to retire from all aid, and to wrap ourselves in the mantle of self-sufficiency. For assuredly no one will care for him who cares for nobody. Friendship is precious, not only in the shade but in the sunshine of life. . . . I will recur for proof to the days we have lately passed. On these indeed the sun shone brightly. . . . Hills, valleys, chateaux, gardens, rivers, every object wore its liveliest hue. Whence did they borrow it? From the presence of our charming companion. They were pleasing because she seemed pleased. . . . When Nature assigned us the same *habitation* she gave us over it a divided empire. To you she allotted the field of science, to me that of morals. When the circle is to be squared, or the orbit of a comet to be traced; when the arch of greatest strength or the solid of least resistance is to be investigated, take up the problem —it is yours; Nature has given you no cognisance of it. In like manner, in denying to you the feelings of sympathy, of benevolence, of gratitude, of justice, of love, of friendship, she has excluded you from their control. To these she has adapted the mechanism of the Heart. Morals were too essential to the happiness of man to be risked on the uncertain combinations of the Head."

This reminds one of Diderot, and of Carlyle's comment, "*Be* virtuous then." Nature in the earlier periods of American investigation "allotted" the field of science to Franklin, the Bertrams, and Wilson the ornithologist; and in the sphere of philology to the famous Lindley Murray, and Noah Webster (1758-1843), Johnson's successor in English lexicography. She can hardly be said to have consigned to Jefferson the care of morals. His religion and ethics, at their theoretic best, were those of the too-much-abused though rather vulgar immigrant, his friend Tom Paine, and of the French *Encyclopédie*. In light literature a successful dilettante, his power of putting in forcible terms a sometimes

fallacious argument is better exhibited in a few paragraphs of the Inaugural Address to his Presidency (1801-1809), one of a series which, though necessarily written under some constraint, have more life and individuality than is generally to be found in Queen's Speeches :—

"All will bear in mind this principle, that though the will of the majority is in all cases to prevail, *that* will, to be rightful, must be reasonable ; that the minority possess their equal rights, which equal laws must protect. . . . Let us reflect, that having banished from our land that religious intolerance under which mankind so long bled and suffered, we have yet gained little if we countenance a political intolerance as despotic, as wicked, and capable of as bitter persecutions. During the throes and convulsions of the ancient world ; during the agonising spasms of infuriated man, seeking through blood and slaughter his long-lost liberty, it was not wonderful that the agitation of the billows should reach even this distant and peaceful shore ; that this should be more felt by some and feared by others . . . but every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brothers of the same principle. We are all republicans ; we are all federalists. . . . Some honest men fear that a republican government cannot be strong. . . . I believe this, on the contrary, the strongest government on earth. I believe it is the only one where every man at the call of the law would fly to the standard of the law, and would meet invasions of the public order as his own personal concern. Sometimes it is said that man cannot be trusted to the government of himself. Can he then be trusted with the government of others ? Or have we found angels in the form of kings to govern him ? Let history[1] answer this question.

His Secretary of State and successor in the Presidency, JAMES MADISON—the fourth in single, the third in double office—one of the leaders of the Convention, and coadjutor with Jay and Hamilton in the *Federalist*, was somewhat of a trimmer in politics; but there is no reason to assert that his change of front was interested. His first schism with his old leader was on occasion of the proclamation of neutrality in the Anglo-French War—a damper on the zeal

[1] Contrast, as an opposite extreme, the reading of history by Mr. Carlyle and Mr. Froude. Jefferson, in this plea for unrestrained democracy, ingeniously shifts the nominative—*he* who cannot govern himself is not the man to govern others.

of the more pronounced Gallo-philists, for which Hamilton was largely responsible. He testified to the influence exerted over his mind by the masterful will of Jefferson, in extending to his own State the resolutions of 1798, which were, with some plausibility, appealed to, in their own justification, by the rebels of 1861. Madison's claims to literary distinction are neither transcendent nor contemptible. He is entitled to be remembered as having had a share in the form, as well as the matter, of the Declaration of Independence, of the Constitution, and of Washington's retiring address. The close of Quincy Adams' eulogy on his memory is characteristic of both men :—

> "You too have the solemn duty to perform of improving the condition of your species by improving your own. Not in the great and strong wind of a revolution, which rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord—for the Lord is not in the wind; not in the earthquake of a revolutionary war, marching to the onset between the battlefield and the scaffold—for the Lord is not in the earthquake; not in the fire of civil discussion, in war between the members and the head, in nullification of the laws of the Union by the forcible resistance of one refractory State—for the Lord is not in the fire. . . . No, it is in the still small voice that succeeded the whirlwind, the earthquake, and the fire. The voice that stills the raging of the waves and the tumults of the people—that spoke the words of peace, of harmony, of union. And for that voice may you and your children's children, 'to the last syllable of recorded time,' fix your eyes upon the memory, and listen with your ears to the life of JAMES MADISON!"

Among the religious writers, whose career began in the Colonial and ended in the Revolution time, two are worthy of notice; the one as holding himself apart from all political strife, the other as an eloquent advocate of the unpopular side. When the tea-chests were being emptied into Boston Harbour, JOHN WOOLMAN (born in New Jersey 1720) was finishing the last of his numerous tracts. A consistent apostle of peace, friend of the Indians, and opponent of negro slavery, he, at an early period of his life, nearly got into trouble by his re-

fusal to bear arms; but escaped active persecution, and survived to write his famous *Journal* of experiences in both continents. This book, though inspired by the consciousness of being under the guidance of an inward voice, owes its charm to the absence of the assumption of infallibility that sometimes accompanies the belief in a special Providence, to the quaint simplicity of its style, and the vein of humanity, extending alike to "man and bird and beast," which pervades it. The following record of a juvenile case of conscience quaintly illustrates those qualities:—

"A thing remarkable in my childhood was that once going to a neighbour's house, I saw on the way a robin sitting on her nest, and as I came near she went off, but having young ones flew about, and with many cries expressed her concern for them: I stood and threw stones at her, till, one striking her, she fell down dead: at first I was pleased with the exploit, but after a few minutes was seized with horror, as having in a sportive way killed an innocent creature while she was careful for her young: I beheld her lying dead, and thought these young ones for which she was so careful must now perish for want of their dam to nourish them; and after some painful consideration on the subject, I climbed up the tree, took all the young birds, and killed them, supposing that better than to leave them to pine away and die miserably; and believed in this case that the Scripture proverb was fulfilled, 'The tender mercies of the wicked are cruel.' I then went on my errand, but for some hours could think of little else but the cruelties I had committed, and was much troubled."

Later we find Woolman "in an awful frame of mind," going to meeting "exercised by the Spirit," to speak "more than was required" before his elders; repenting of his error, but taking heart again to reprove "drinking and vain sports" in the country "about the time called Christmas"—a "heavy exercise;" then "through the revelation of Jesus Christ" acquiescing in his duties as a tailor; marrying "a well-inclined damsel;" entertaining soldiers billeted in his house, but refusing to take pay for it; safe by his courteous confidence among the tomahawks of the Susquehannah; visiting England, where he declined to send letters by post, in consideration for the overwrought carriers, or to wear dyed garments; making converts

of the poor sailors; denouncing false displays of eloquence, and returning home to rest from his labours:—a man genuinely pious, unaffectedly good, whose writings, if seldom strikingly original, are always so suggestive and gracious that we can understand the sentiment of Charles Lamb, who said, "get" them "by heart and love the early Quakers." Woolman has, in some respects, the innocence of the child in the *Story without an End;* in others, he is a shrewd detective of the love of wealth and the world, which have gone far to destroy the distinctive traits of his society. His book is disproportionate, sometimes fanatical; but all toiling and suffering creatures should bless his memory. The following dream is worthy of Bunyan in thought, almost of De Quincey in style:—

"In a time of sickness, a little more than two years and a half ago, I was brought so near the gates of death that I forgot my name. Being then desirous to know who I was, I saw a mass of a dull gloomy colour between the south and the east, and was informed that this mass was human beings in as great misery as they could be and live, and that I was mixed with them, and that henceforth I might not consider myself as a distinct or separate being. In this state I remained several hours. I then heard a soft melodious voice, more pure and harmonious than any I had heard with my ears before; I believed it was the voice of an angel who spake to the other angels; the words were, 'John Woolman is dead.' I soon remembered that I was once John Woolman, and being assured that I was alive in the body, I greatly wondered what that heavenly voice could mean. I believed beyond doubting that it was the voice of an holy angel, but as yet it was a mystery to me.

"I was then carried in spirit to the mines where poor oppressed people were digging rich treasures for those called Christians, and heard them blaspheme the name of Christ, at which I was grieved, for His name to me was precious. I was then informed that these heathens were told that those who oppressed them were the followers of Christ; and they said among themselves, 'If Christ directed them to use us in this sort, then Christ is a cruel tyrant.'

"All this time the song of the angel remained a mystery; and in the morning, my dear wife and some others coming to my bedside, I asked them if they knew who I was, and they, telling me I was John Woolman, thought I was light-headed, for I told them not what the angel said, nor was I disposed to talk much to any one, but was very desirous to get so deep that I might understand this mystery.

"My tongue was often so dry that I could not speak till I had moved it about and gathered some moisture, and as I lay still for a time I at length felt a Divine power prepare my mouth that I could speak, and I then said: 'I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. And the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.' Then the mystery was opened, and I perceived there was joy in heaven over a sinner who had repented, and that the language, 'John Woolman is dead,' meant no more than the death of my own will."

Shortly after Woolman's death the congregation of Hollis Street Church, Boston (1776),—inspired by the patriotic spirit of their town, just abandoned by English troops,—revolted against the persistent royalism of their pastor, Mather Byles; and, passing upon him a vote of censure, led to his haughty resignation of an office, the duties of which he had, for upwards of forty years, discharged with honour and esteem. He was subsequently tried for disloyalty, and, after being for a period confined under guard to his house, permitted to pass the remainder of his long life in retirement. Ere its close, he must have been partially reconciled to some of the revolutionary leaders; for our last-written record of him is a letter to Franklin, his fellow-townsman and exact contemporary (both having been born in Boston, 1706), gratefully acknowledging some act of kindness. Byles is in some respects a unique figure in the New England pulpit. Allied by descent to the Mather and Cotton dynasty, professing the Puritan creed, and attached to the Presbyterian ceremonial, his manners, politics, and, to some extent, his cast of mind, were those of a high dignitary of the Church of England. His reputation as a wit, in which capacity he indulged freely in puns and practical jokes, recalls that of Bishop Corbet or Dr. South. The friendly correspondent of Pope, he wrote verses after—a long way after—the manner of the master, whom he was by his admirers declared to excel. Elsewhere, more in the spirit of Prior and Gay, he made parodies of the psalms. But

though a man of the world, a fine gentleman in dress and gait, a stickler for his dignity, and a conversationalist whose repartees were welcomed or feared in society, he was by all accounts a powerful preacher. Selected passages of his eloquence exhibit the satisfactory result to which his own standard of excellence, always aimed at and frequently attained, must have contributed. He held that

"a finished minister" should have a "graceful deportment, elegant address, and fluent utterance. He must study an easy style, expressive diction, and tuneful cadences. . . . Rattling periods, uncouth jargon, affected phrases, and finical jingles, let them be condemned, let them be hissed from the desk and blotted from the page. . . . The study of the minister is the field of battle. Here he plays the hero, tries the dangers of war, and repeats the toils of combat. . . . How often must he watch when others sleep, and his solitary candle burn when the midnight darkness covers the windows of the neighbourhood!"[1]

A model whose implied advice is not always followed where the fluency of vulgar ignorance has been frequently confounded with religious inspiration. The gloom of Byles' creed, or what he retained of it, appears mainly in his frequent and generally impressive images of death, his dwelling on the vanity of human wishes, the folly of mortal pride in prospect of the great leveller, *e.g.*—

"In a few years the most beauteous and learned and pious head will grin a hideous skull." . . . "A creature drooping to dust and falling into a filthy grave to set up for strength and beauty and honour and applause! . . So might an emmet crawl in state, and value itself on its imaginary possessions and conceited accomplishments. So might a shadow, lengthened by the setting sun, admire to find itself grown so tall, while in the same moment it was going to vanish, blended in the gathering twilight and lost in night."

This writer's eloquence is occasionally apt to overreach itself; the adjectives are piled too high, and the ideas[2] repeated. It

[1] This and the following passage are quoted by Mr. Tyler, vol. ii. pp. 195-197.

[2] *V.* especially a similar passage in Duyckinck, vol. i. p. 119.

would be cruel to compare it with the master-passages of Jeremy Taylor, with the apostrophe, perhaps the most splendid in Elizabethan prose, that rounds off Raleigh's *History of the World*, or with Sir Thomas Browne's *Urn-Burial;* but it is genuine eloquence, and a worthy close to our record of the elder, that is, the orthodox, religious oratory of the West.

The age of the Titans in Transatlantic history abounds in minor *literati*, whose light effusions, mainly satirical or fanciful sketches in prose and verse, throw a somewhat dim and rugged lustre over its graver page. The bulk of those patent reflections of the manner and thought of Butler, Pope, Swift, and Shenstone are a penance to wade through, and scarce claim remembrance for their authors. A few stand out conspicuously by the celebrity of the names with which they are associated, or some approach to originality in their style. Among these are the social caricatures of Judge Brackenridge (who, though born in Scotland, lived in America from infancy), and his doggerel but vigorous lines on *Bunker Hill; Mount Vernon*, an ode by David Humphreys, Ambassador to Lisbon in 1794, author of several other pieces and an unsuccessful comedy; the political satires of Mercy Warren, authoress of *Things Necessary to a Woman* (suggested in part by the *Rape of the Lock*, and the obvious model of the more recent squib, *Nothing to Wear*), and of a *History of the Revolution*, remarkable only as the first in date; Jonathan M. Sewall, remembered by two lines addressed to his countrymen in an epilogue to the tragedy of Cato—

> "No pent-up Utica contracts your powers,
> But the whole boundless continent is yours;"

Joel Barlow's *Hasty Pudding*, a mock heroic in the style of Ambrose Phillips, and his tremendous epic entitled the *Columbiad*.[1] To these we have to add Francis Hopkinson's

[1] "No critic," says Mr. Edwin P. Whipple, "in the last fifty years has

Battle of the Kegs, his *Pretty Story* — a burlesque closely fashioned after Arbuthnot's *John Bull* — his *New Roof*, meaning the American Constitution, and his satire on the pedantry of the sciences, entitled *The Salt Box*.

A more interesting figure of the time is curiously associated with its social circumstances. In the year 1761, a negro child called Phillis was brought from Africa to the human market of Boston, and sold to a Mrs. Wheatley, from whom she took her name. If the alleged facts of her career are reliable, it is one of the most remarkable instances of precocity on record. Arriving on the new continent, without even the rudiments of education, she, by the private study of leisure hours, in the household of which she remained a slave, acquired, within a few years, a thorough mastery of the English language, and began to learn Latin. In her seventeenth year (1770) she wrote verses, a volume of which was published in 1773, when, with other members of the family, she went to visit London, and, on her return, among other pieces, sent a short ode to Washington, with a letter, which drew from him a gracious and complimentary reply. Her poetry is modelled on that of the English masters of the century; but few have thrown apter thoughts into smoother lines. The following reference in those addressed to the memory of Mæcenas are suggestive of her feeling for a native land, where she only could recall an image of her mother, according to some heathen rite, pouring out water before the rising sun—

read more than a hundred lines of it, and even this effort of attention has been a deadly fight with those merciful tendencies in the human organism which softly wrap the overworked mind in the blessedness of sleep." Probably Mr. Whipple is right in what he means to say of the *Columbiad;* but, despite the London *Spectator*, I must reassert that Mr. Whipple's style scarcely combines "the strength of the *Areopagitica* with the liveliness of the *Spectator*"—presuming Mr. Griswold to mean that of Addison and Steele.

"The happier Terence all the choir inspired,
His soul replenished and his bosom fired;
But say, ye Muses, why this partial grace,
To one alone of Afric's sable race,
From age to age transmitting thus his name,
With the first glory in the rolls of fame?"

Two couplets, at least, in her paraphrase of Ovid's account of Niobe, close with strong lines—

"With clouds encompassed, glorious Phœbus stands
The feathered vengeance quivering in his hands."
"Then didst thou Sipylus the language hear
Of fate portentous whistling in the air."

The number of American songstresses has been portentous; but few have surpassed the musical graces of this black girl.

"Alba ligustra cadunt, vaccinia nigra leguntur."

The ballad literature of the Revolution days is said to have attracted the attention of Lord Chatham, less probably from its intrinsic merit than from its faithful though rough embodiment of the sentiments that not only moved on the surface, but penetrated the depths of the national life. The anonymous popular literature of a country is the best "abstract and brief chronicle of the time" in which it is produced. The songs current in America during this era, inspired by the same spirit, and pitched in the same key, are historically interesting and artistically monotonous. They celebrate, in rude verse, the achievements of local heroes like *Bold Hawthorne;* or ridicule, as in *Jack Brag,* the British Lion; or exhibit the overthrow of vaulting ambition in *The Fate of Burgoyne;* or, as in *Wyoming Massacre,* bewail the fallen; while the schoolboy huzzahs of *Free America* are hailing the triumph of the good cause. Among the rude national anthems of the West, *Yankee Doodle* is notable as having been an old Dutch catch adapted into an English satirical chant, and subsequently adopted, with conscious or unconscious irony, by the American troops. *Hail Columbia* was

a somewhat later production (1798) of Joseph Hopkinson. The *Adams and Liberty* of Robert Treat Paine, jun., takes higher rank, but it was overpraised at the time, and is still overpraised. The *Star-spangled Banner* of Francis S. Key is associated with the traditions of the second British war.

Our records of this era may close with a brief notice of three writers of more magnitude:—a lawyer, a divine, and a soldier, all considerable figures in their day, none of whom deserve to be forgotten. Of these, the first, John Trumbull of Connecticut, was a precocious student of Yale, where he especially devoted himself to the English classics, and with Dwight, Humphreys, and Barlow (one of the earliest of the brotherhoods frequent in the history of American letters), sent fairly-written essays to the journals. In 1772 (in his twenty-second year) he published *The Progress of Dulness.* This satire, the title of which must have been suggested conjointly by the great works of Hogarth and of Pope, is devoted to exhibit the influence of what the author held to be the unprofitable college education of the time, and the false fashions of society, on the minds and fortunes of three originally foolish persons, Tom Brainless, Dick Hairbrain, and Miss Harriet Simper. The first, after the smattering of study required for his diploma, acquires the art of picking other people's brains, and is installed in a pulpit, where, his impudence, yoked with dulness,

> "Reads o'er his notes with halting pace,
> Masked in the stiffness of his face,
> With gestures such as might become
> Those statues once that spoke at Rome,
> Or Livy's ox that to the State
> Declared the oracles of fate,
> In awkward tones, nor said nor sung,
> Slow rumbling o'er the faltering tongue;
> Two hours his drawling speech holds on,
> And names it preaching when 'tis done."

It is proper to remember that this was written more than

ten years before the appearance of *The Task*. Hairbrain, a richer and more dissolute blockhead, passing from cards and dice, at the University, to travel, meets and ultimately jilts Harriet the coquette, who, with others of her class, goes to meeting on pretext of hearing the sermon—

> "As though they meant to take by blows
> Th' opposing galleries of beaux,
> To church the female squadron move
> All armed with weapons used in love;
> Like coloured ensigns, gay and fair,
> High caps rise floating in the air,
> Bright silk its varied radiance flings,
> And streamers wave in kissing strings:
> Each bears th' artill'ry of her charms,
> Like training bands at viewing arms."

In 1775 Trumbull published the first three cantos of his mock epic, *M'Fingal*, and added the fourth in 1782, after the close of the war. The success of the first issue was so remarkable that it soon attained a thirtieth edition. A recent critic has assured us that "it was considered one of the forces of the Revolution, because, as a satire on the Tories, it penetrated into every farmhouse, and sent the rustic volunteers laughing into the ranks of Washington and Greene." The verse and plan of this poem are alike closely modelled on that of Butler; but the political feeling of the two is in direct antagonism. M'Fingal, a type of the royalist squires, as "the stupid party," of New England, is Hudibras in reverse; while in the somewhat verbose Honorius the champion of the Puritans is reinstated in dignity. The satire, however, as in the case of its prototype in travesty, consists in the unconscious absurdities of word and deed perpetrated, and the disgraces undergone by the hero, *alias* the butt, himself. The following humorously describes his boomerang style of controversy:—

> "As some muskets so contrive it
> As oft to miss the mark they drive at,

And, though well aimed at duck or plover,
Bear wide and kick their owners over,
So fared our Squire whose reasoning toil
Would often on himself recoil,
And so much injured more his side
The stronger arguments he applied,
As old war elephants, dismayed,
Trod down the troops they came to aid."

M'Fingal is ultimately subjected to the then newly-invented progress of tarring and feathering, described by Trumbull "as if he loved it;" and constrained to exercise the "second-sight" derived from his Scotch ancestry, in prophecies of ruin to his cause. This is one of the touches of genuine patriotism which, more completely to the author's compeers in the struggle than to us, relieved the monotony of the long burlesque—

"I hear a voice that calls away
And cries, 'The Whigs will win the day!'
My beck'ning genius gives command,
And bids me fly the fatal land,
Where, changing name and constitution,
Rebellion turns to Revolution."

In 1785, writing to a French critic, Trumbull takes credit for having endeavoured, "with as much impartiality as possible, to satirise the follies and extravagances of his countrymen as well as their enemies." His poem would not have been so popular had he quite fulfilled his purpose. It is everywhere lauded for its thorough American spirit; but we may leave this once famous, and still remarkable, production by an example in which the laudable design is apparent. It is where a noisy mob are raising in the market-place a pole, precursor of the yet more ominously named "Tree of Liberty."

"Not higher school-boys kites aspire,
Or royal mast or country spire,
Like spears at Brobdignagian tilting,
Or Satan's walking staff in Milton,
And on its top the flag unfurled
Waved triumph o'er the gazing world,
Inscribed with inconsistent types
Of Liberty and thirteen stripes."

To which he adds in a note, "It would doubtless be wrong to suppose that the stripes bear any allusion to the Slave Trade." The rhymes are atrocious, the rhythm Butler's, not at his best; but the satire is an interesting forestalment of the redeeming feature of the modern school of so-called American humorists —their plain speech about contemporary abuses.

Timothy Dwight, Trumbull's companion and coadjutor at Yale, wrote his *Conquest of Canaan*, as a tutor of the college over which he afterwards presided, but did not publish it till after the close of the war, when his national song, entitled *Columbia*, an outburst of patriotic enthusiasm rather than poetry, had attracted attention. There followed in 1788 his *Triumph of Infidelity*, the earliest American verse in which—conspicuously in the picture of "The Smooth Divine"—the influence of Cowper is distinctly visible, and *Greenfield Hill*, an idyllic poem or series of poems, some in octosyllabics, others in the Spenserian stanza, in which the manners and measures of various English predecessors are gracefully adapted to the commemoration of local events and home scenery. Dwight was the author of several prose essays and reviews, and some of the descriptions in his volume of *Travels in New England and New York* have been justly admired for accuracy and occasional richness of illustration. On reading his impressions of the Catskills, the White Mountains, and Lake George, it has to be borne in mind that he lived before this kind of writing had grown stale, and that much that has become platitude since the days of Scott and Byron was, to earlier generations, a novelty. The following, however, is worth attention as an example of the intrusion of commonplace on the one side and pedantry on the other, which is still apt to disfigure fine writing, especially across the Atlantic:—

"Directly over the gap I have mentioned, and through which this combination of beauty was presented to us, the moon, far southward, *in her handsomest crescent* (!), sat on the eastern and the evening star

on the western side of the opening, at equal distances from the bordering mountains, and, shining from a sky perfectly pure and serene, finished the prospect. The crimson lustre, however, soon faded: the mountains *lost their gilding;* the lake became misty and dim. The splendour of the moon and Hesper increased," etc.

This recalls Cowley's description of the dress of the archangel Gabriel in the *Davideis.* Cowper, on the other hand, has deservedly praised the passage in the *Canaan*—an unreadable epic, made more so by the mixture of the Revolutionary battles with those of the Israelites—in which it is said that night

> "With magic hand becalmed the solemn even
> And drew day's curtain from the spangled heaven.
> At once the planets sailed around the throne,
> At once ten thousand worlds in splendour shone;"

a passage presenting a close resemblance, probably unknown to Blanco White, to the leading idea of his great sonnet. Elsewhere in the same composition we have a prophecy of the future of America, with a fine rhetorical ring at the close:—

> "Then smiling art shall wrap the fields in bloom,
> Fine the rich ore and guide the useful loom,
> Then lofty towers in golden pomp arise;
> Then spiry cities meet auspicious skies;
> The soul on wisdom's wing sublimely soar,
> New virtues cherish and new truths explore.
> Thro' times-long tract our name celestial run,
> Climb in the east and circle with the sun."

But it rises only to the level of an ordinary "Newdigate." That Dwight was more of a clergyman than a poet appears from his most vigorous piece of writing being a somewhat abusive dedication of his *Triumph* to M. de Voltaire:—

"Sir, your Creator endowed you with shining talents, and cast your lot in a field of action where they might be most happily employed. In the progress of a long and industrious life, you devoted them to a single purpose—the elevation of your character above His. For the accomplishment of this purpose with a diligence, etc. . . . you taught, as far as your example and sentiments extended their influence, that the chief end of man was to slander his God and abuse him for ever. To whom could such an effort as the following be dedicated with more propriety than to you?"

Dr. Dwight was a well-meaning, amiable, indefatigable man, of remarkable talent, but distinctly falling short of genius. Of the latter quality Philip Freneau, the last of our group, seems to have had at least a touch, though as often it was marred by an incorrigible fluency. Freneau, scion of a French family exiled by the Edict of Nantes, born in New York 1752, a graduate with Madison, in 1771, of New Jersey, when he was already known as a precocious versifier, led an adventurous and roving life. A soldier in the Revolution war, he was, in 1780, confined in the British prison-ship, whence he lampooned the floating hospital opposite, as a slaughter-house, visited by a Hessian surgeon, whose pills and blisters "scattered fate where'er his footsteps came." After his liberation he commanded a vessel sailing from Charleston, and on his return settled down into the drudgery of journalism, in which, during the remainder of his days, he was engaged as an advocate of the Jeffersonian policy. Freneau seems to have been an unscrupulous politician, having turned against his former friends the Federalists, especially the elder Adams; but he was an accurate as well as vivacious writer in prose, and continued till his death, in 1832, to make himself feared if not respected. The best specimen of his prose is his *Advice to Authors*, issued in 1788, with the pseudo-signature of Philip Slender. The following selections from this amusing and often wise *brochure* are sufficiently characteristic and sometimes still applicable :—

"I see no reason that because we are all striving to live by the same idle trade we should suffer ourselves to be embittered against each other, like a paternity of rival mechanics in the same street. . . . Where the whole profits of a company amount to little or nothing, there ought not to be any quarrel about dividends." . . . The English "are excusable in treating the American authors as inferiors, a political and literary independence of their nation being two very different things; the first was accomplished in about seven years, the latter will not be completely effected perhaps in as many centuries. . . . When you write a book for the public have nothing to do with *Epistles dedicatory*. They were first invented by slaves, and have been continued by fools

and sycophants. . . . Be careful to avoid all connection with doctors of law and divinity, masters of arts, professors of colleges, and in general all those that wear square black caps. A mere scholar and an original author are two animals as different from each other as a fresh and salt water sailor. . . . If you are so poor that you are forced to spend your life in a garret, give thanks that you are not forced to spend it in a tub. . . . Never engage in any business as an understrapper. I cannot endure to see an author so debase his profession as to submit to be second in any office. . . . Never make a present of your works to great men. If they do not think them worth purchasing, trust me, they will not think them worth reading. If fortune seems determined to starve you, do not take to drinking, gambling, or bridge-building, as some have done . . . but retire to some uninhabited island or desert, and there, at your leisure, end your life with decency."

There is much in this of the spirit of the author's friend Franklin; but Freneau had another vein. The headlong mass of his verse far exceeded his powers to keep it up to the highest standard of that age, far less to escape the anathemas of our own when every graduate can make fair jingle on moon or glacier, on love or war. Nine-tenths of his patriotic hymns, of his odes valedictory, worshipful, or comminative, are such as are consigned to the corners of weekly newspapers. Some half dozen pieces, however, remain to prove that Philip Freneau was a poet; notably his *Wild Honeysuckle*, of which we give the opening and the closing verses—

"Fair flower that dos't so comely grow,
Hid in this silent dull retreat,
Untouched thy honeyed blossoms blow,
Unseen thy little branches greet;
No roving foot shall crush thee here,
Nor busy hand provoke a tear.

. . . . . .

"From morning suns and evening dews
At first thy little being came;
If nothing once you nothing lose,
For when you die you are the same.
The space between is but an hour,
The frail duration of a flower."

It would be uncivil to compare this, or the address of *April*

to May, with Ben Jonson's *Lily*, Herrick's *Daffodils*, or Wordsworth's *Daisy;* but it is genuine poetry. Nor less so are the verses to the *Hurricane*, to *Neversink Heights*, to *St. Catherina*, or to *The Dying Indian*, with the motto "Debemur morti nos, nostraque." Freneau is peculiarly successful in his efforts to embody the sentiments and revive the traditions of the old races of the land. Duyckinck has pointed out that *O'Connor's Child* derives one of its best lines from our author's *Indian Burying-Ground*. Campbell writes—

> "Now on the grass green turf he sits,
> His tassell'd horn beside him laid:
> Now o'er the hills in chase he flits,
> The hunter and the deer a shade."

Freneau certainly anticipates him in the stanza—

> "By midnight moons o'er moistening dews,
> In vestments for the chase arrayed,
> The hunter still the deer pursues,
> The hunter and the deer—a shade."

Similarly Scott's *Marmion* from the same source adopts—

> "And snatched the spear, but left the shield."

The famous death-song beginning—

> "The sun sets at night and the stars shun the day,"

with the refrain—

> "For the son of Alknomook can never complain,"

have been claimed by Mrs. Edgeworth for Mrs. Hunter, but I believe them to be Freneau's:[1] they in any case are the keynote of the last words of the Oneida chief in *Gertrude of Wyoming*. Our author's satire is, at its best, in the verses on the New England Puritans, with two of which

[1] Henry Clay, in his great speech on the Seminole war of 1819, so quotes it, and he ought to have known the authorship.

we must close this attempt to revive a memory unduly neglected—

"There exiles were formed in a whimsical mould,
And were awed by their priests, like the Hebrews of old,
Disclaimed all pretences to jesting and laughter,
And sighed their lives through to be happy hereafter.

On a crown immaterial their thoughts were intent,
They looked towards Zion wherever they went,
Did all things in hope of a future reward,
And worried mankind—for the sake of the Lord."

CHAPTER IV.

AMERICAN POLITICS AND ORATORY.

"THE curse of this country," remarked an American statesman, "is eloquent men." The West has long been noted for fluency—often superfluency—of speech. The period immediately succeeding the Revolution is illustrated by a body of oratory which, unlike that concerned with the war itself, has been preserved as the most interesting record of the first steps in the progress of the newly-established nation. To give a full account of these would be to write the early history of the United States. Our limits and design permit only such reference to the leading events of the age as will make partially intelligible its most conspicuous intellectual efforts. Every good citizen felt himself called to play some part in raising the superstructure on the foundations which had been laid. The great debate of 1788, in which the claims of the central authority were upheld by Hamilton, Madison, and Marshall, against the extreme view of State Rights advocated with the last eloquence of Patrick Henry,[1] having resulted in the adoption, in the following year, of the Constitution by all the States, a new set of differences began to emerge. In 1794

[1] In the course of his speech the following image illustrates the strong prejudice against the Federalists:—"This constitution is said to have beautiful features, but, among other deformities, it has an awful squinting—it squints towards monarchy."

there followed the first of a long series of discussions on the laws of trade and the imposition of custom duties: in 1796 we come to an exciting passage of arms (in which, as we have seen, Fisher Ames was for the last time publicly conspicuous) on the obligations imposed by the British Treaty. The inaugural addresses of Adams and Jefferson were designed to calm the troubled waters; but (1803) they were again stirred to storm by the controversies about the navigation of the Mississippi, ending in the purchase of Louisiana from France. We come next to the remarkable group of speeches directly or indirectly relative to the second rupture with Great Britain in 1812. The elements of this crisis began to manifest themselves soon after the death of Hamilton, and, during the term of Jefferson's Presidency, took a threatening shape. In the seemingly internecine struggle of the two great powers of the Old World, weaker States ran the risk of being ground between "the incensed points of mighty opposites." It was as hard for outsiders to be neutral as to a citizen of Solon's Athens: those who assumed an impartial attitude were exposed to the aggressions of either side,—aggressions which bore with special severity on a young commercial nation. By the Berlin decrees and the "Orders in Council," the ships of the Union were all but swept from the seas, grass grew on the streets of the shore cities, and the high-handed enforcement of the right of search by the attack (outside Hampton Roads) of the "Leopard" on the "Chesapeake," united all parties in a demand for reparation. The recall of the British admiral who authorised the outrage allayed the feeling, but the grievance remained; and Congress was, in retaliation, driven to what was known as the "Restrictive System," *i.e.* placing an embargo on their own vessels, or confining them to port, with a view to protect them from the dangers of a practical piracy. Against this measure we have on record an outburst of New England

oratory from Josiah Quincy, one of the new powers in the House of Representatives, in which his State was already beginning to strive with Virginia for political pre-eminence :—

"The decrees of France prohibit us from trading with Great Britain. The orders of Great Britain prohibit us from trading with France. And what do we? Why, in direct subserviency to the edicts of each, we prohibit our citizens from trading with either. We do more; as if unqualified submission was not humiliating enough, we descend to an act of supererogation in servility—we abandon trade altogether. . . . An embargo liberty was never cradled in Massachusetts. Our liberty was not so much a mountain as a sea-nymph. She was free as the air. She could swim or she could run. . . . Our fathers met her as she came, like the goddess of liberty, from the waves. They caught her as she was sporting on the beach. They courted her as she was spreading her nets upon the rocks. But an embargo liberty, a hand-cuffed liberty, a liberty in fetters, a liberty traversing between the four sides of a prison and beating her hand against the walls, is none of our offspring. Its parentage is all inland."

These old harangues are more interesting than modern novels, for many reasons. They come back to us as new, because undeservedly forgotten: we are not made weary of them in "Reviews:" they deal with realities: they are typical not only of the individual speakers, but of the larger interests they in the main honestly strove to represent. In the above we have evidence of the zeal for a State conflicting with zeal for the aggregate community which distinguishes the bulk of Transatlantic eloquence, and there is a distinct trace of the classical ornament with which that of New England has been frequently overlaid. It seems natural that the speaker, scion of an illustrious academic race, should have terminated his public career in 1845 as President of Harvard University. Quincy opposed the annexation of Louisiana, sharing with several, especially northern, politicians of the time the belief that the Union could not endure in excess of its primitive bounds. This mistake was counterbalanced by his truer insight into the disasters likely to befall his country from

the abuses of patronage. John Quincy Adams said that his speech of January 1811, from which we take the following, "ought to be hung up in every office of every office-holder in the Union":—

"Let a collector of customs, or postmaster, or factor, be called on to pay the last debt of nature. The poor man shall not be cold long before the corpse is in the coffin; the mail shall be crowded with letters, certificates, recommendations, and every species of sycophantic solicitation by which obtrusive mendicity seeks charity or invites compassion. We hear the clamour of the craving animals at the treasury trough here in this capitol. Such running, such jostling, such wriggling, such clambering over one another's backs, because the tub is so narrow and the company so crowded."

Contrary to expectation, if it is allowable to expect anything from a politician, Quincy opposed the steps taken in 1813 to carry on the war. The Peace Society can point to no more vehement advocacy of their views than this strong though turbid passage :—

"The whole atmosphere rings with the utterance from the other side of the House of the word 'glory' in connection with this invasion. It is the glory of the tiger which lifts his jaws, all foul and bloody, from the bowels of his victim and roars for his companions of the wood to come and witness his prowess and his spoils. . . . Be such—the glory of Gengis Khan and Bonaparte—far, very far from my country. Never may it be accursed with such fame!

'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,' etc.

May such fame as this be my country's meed!"

A North American Reviewer (October 1865), whose anti-rebellious wrath can see nothing tolerable in the South, maintains that the war was due to the fire-eating Carolinians and Virginians of the time. It is remarkable, on the contrary, that the fieriest of their cavaliers, John Randolph, whose quick temper afterwards led him into a duel with his fellow-Senator Clay,[1] appears, in the debate of 1811, as the most

[1] Randolph, having referred to Clay's service, as secretary under Quincy Adams, as the "coalition of Blifil and Black George—the combination, unheard of till then, of the puritan with the blackleg," afterwards regretted his vio-

eloquent advocate for concession; dwelling, with the honest, if not always considerate, passion of his nature, on the aid to the Napoleonic despotism that might be given by antagonism to England :—

"Will you plunge yourself in war because you have passed a foolish and ruinous law and are ashamed to repeal it? But our good friend the French emperor stands in the way of this repeal. . . . My imagination shrinks from the miseries of such a connection. I call upon the House to reflect whether they are not about to abandon all reclamation for the unparalleled outrages of the French Government, to give up our claim for plundered millions; and I ask what reparation or atonement they can expect to obtain in hours of future dalliance, after they shall have made a tender of their persons to this great deflowerer of the virginity of republics. . . . Go! march to Canada! Leave the broad bosom of the Chesapeake and her hundred tributary rivers, the whole line of sea-coast from Machias to St. Mary's, unprotected. You have taken Quebec—have you conquered England? Will you seek for the deep foundations of her power in the frozen deserts of Labrador?

'Her march is on the mountain wave,
Her home is on the deep.'

Grant for a moment that, in Canada, you touched the sinews of her strength, instead of removing a clog on her resources. In what situation would you then place some of the best men of the nation? As Chatham and Burke and the whole band of her patriots prayed for her defeat in 1776, so must some of the truest friends to their country deprecate the success of our arms against the only power that holds in check the arch enemy of mankind. . . . I acknowledge the influence of a Shakespeare and a Milton upon my imagination, of a Locke upon my understanding, of a Sydney upon my political principles. . . This is a British influence which I can never shake off. I allow much to the just and honest prejudices growing out of the Revolution. By whom have they been suppressed, when they ran counter to the interests of my country? By Washington. By whom, would you listen to them, are they most keenly felt? By felons escaped from the jails of Paris, Newgate, and Kilmainham . . . who in this abused and insulted country have set up for political teachers, and whose disciples give no other proof of their progress in republicanism except a blind devotion to the most ruthless military despotism that the world ever saw."

The most effective answer to this speech was made by a

lence and fired in the air. Clay missed him, and then ran up with the words, "I trust in God, my dear sir, you are untouched; after what has occurred I would not have harmed you for a thousand worlds." *V.* James Hamilton's *Life of Randolph.* The annals of this outspoken time are full of romance.

young newly-elected representative of South Carolina, of whom we shall have more to say, John C. Calhoun. The following sentences are characteristic of the line of argument in his *début* to a uniformly-conspicuous, and in some respects illustrious, career :—

"We are next told of the expenses of the war, and that the people will not pay taxes. Why not? . . . I enter my solemn protest against this low and calculating avarice entering this hall of legislation. It is only fit for shops and counting-houses, and ought not to disgrace the seat of sovereignty. . . . It is a compromising spirit, too short-sighted to defend itself, always ready to yield a part to save the balance: it is never safe but under the shield of honour. . . . I am not versed in this policy: I will not pretend to estimate in dollars and cents the value of national independence, or to measure in shillings and pence the misery, the strifes, and the slavery of our impressed seamen. . . . The stale imputation of partiality to France is better calculated for the columns of a newspaper than for the walls of this House. . . . The gentleman from Virginia is at a loss to account for what he calls our hatred to England . . . the country of Locke, of Newton, of Hampden,—having the same language and customs with ourselves, and descended from a common ancestry. Sir, the laws of human affections are uniform. If we have so much to attach us to that country, powerful indeed must be the cause which has overpowered it. . . . The cause is to be found in continued and unprovoked insult and injury. . . . Has he examined the reasons of our high regard for Chatham? It is his ardent patriotism, the heroic courage of his mind, that thought the interest and honour of his country ought to be vindicated at every hazard and expense. I hope when we are called on to admire, we shall also be asked to imitate."

Later in the same session, the speaker, to whom the above maiden effort had drawn admiring attention, again broke out in a strain of bellicose but genuine fervour :—

"Tie down a hero, and he feels the puncture of a pin: throw him into battle, and he becomes almost insensible to vital gashes. So in war. Impelled alternately by hope and fear, stimulated by revenge, depressed by shame or elevated by victory, the people become invincible. No privation can shake their fortitude, no calamity break their spirit. War and restriction may leave the country equally exhausted, but the latter not only leaves you poor, but dispirited, divided, discontented. . . . Not so in war. In that state the common danger unites all, strengthens the bonds of society, and feeds the flame of patriotism. . . . In exchange for the expenses and privations of war

you obtain military and naval skill, and a more perfect organisation of such parts of your administration as are connected with the science of national defence. Are these advantages to be counted as trifles in the present state of the world? Can they be measured by moneyed valuation? I would prefer a single victory over the enemy, by sea or land, to all the good we shall ever derive from the Non-Importation Act."

These extracts claim their space as illustrating the so-called Demosthenic [1] style of one of the two men hailed, in Congress, as the future master-spirits of their age. Calhoun's rival, then his friend, was his senior by only five years; but already, as Speaker of the House, a political power. The peroration of his reply to Quincy's peace speech of 1813 is characteristic of the more direct and popular manner of appeal adopted by Henry Clay of Kentucky:—

"An honourable peace is attainable only by an efficient war. My plan would be to call out the ample resources of the country, give them a judicious direction, prosecute the war with the utmost vigour, strike wherever we can touch the enemy, at sea or on land, and negotiate the terms of a peace at Quebec or at Halifax. We are told that England is a proud and lofty nation, which, disdaining to wait for danger, meets it half way. Haughty as she is, we once triumphed over her, and if we do not listen to the counsels of timidity and despair, we shall again prevail. In such a cause, with the aid of Providence, we must come out crowned with success; but if we fail, let us fail like men, lash ourselves to our gallant tars, and expire together in one common struggle, fighting for Free Trade and Seamen's Rights."

The war, a drawn battle (the British having the advantage on land, the Americans on their lakes), brought to a nominal close (December 24, 1814) by the Treaty of Ghent, really ended with General Andrew Jackson's famous victory at New Orleans, in January 1815. From this date till the outbreak of the great Rebellion of 1861-65, the United States were never again involved in any serious contest. Their conflicts with the Indians, with Algiers, and even with Mexico, were,

[1] The term is not very appropriate. Calhoun's eloquence is notable for earnestness and gravity, and in his later speeches for terseness, combined with a tendency to generalisation, and sometimes hair-splitting dialectic.

despite perilous passages, like those of England in the South and East, "the little wars of a great nation." During the now complete century of their independence, they have been but slightly affected by foreign affairs. International questions, mainly maritime, and disputes about boundaries, have more than once assumed a threatening form, but these storms have blown over, with little trace save the record of discussions happily buried in official verbiage.

Nothing struck a traveller in the years of continental earthquake, 1847-50, so much as the fact that scarce a ripple from these commotions seemed to touch the shores of America; but her internal troubles have been sufficient to make us remember that Liberty is a plant of slow growth. Alongside of it there was springing in the West, with fungus rapidity and pestilential rankness, a weed, whose permanent possession of the same soil was impossible. As early as 1788, William Pinkney, one of the leading lawyers of the age, had addressed the Legislature of his State, in a passage whose spirit is better than its style—"Call not Maryland a land of liberty: do not pretend that she has chosen this country as an asylum, that here she has consecrated her shrine, when here also her unhallowed enemy holds his hellish pandemonium, and our rulers offer sacrifice at his polluted altar. The lily and the bramble may grow in social proximity, but liberty and slavery delight in separation." We have seen that all the Fathers of the State, though some themselves slaveholders, were opposed to the institution. Jefferson, contemplating the black spot which it has cost so many thousand lives to wash away, exclaimed, "I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just:" but towards the close of his career he gave a more uncertain sound. Slavery, favoured by the climate of the South, deducting from the value of the white man's industry, was enthroned by the "cotton-gin" and the steam engine. The abolition (1808) of

the import trade by order of Congress, and its being declared (1820) a capital piracy, was all that, for half a century, Principle, in the up-hill fight against Interest, was able to effect. Already, in 1811, "the Black Question" was referred to as an obstacle in war, and answer given that security against revolt was to be found in the ignorance of the slaves.[1] What was very profitable was, in swift course, found to be very good: "the ladder" of Calhoun's early days, the unfortunate circumstance to be gradually dealt with, was now a condition in itself desirable—a law of Nature or Divine ordinance, supported by the conjoint authority of Plato, of Aristotle, and of the Bible. Towards the close of his career, in assailing a proposal for amending the Constitution, the chivalrous Randolph wrote:—

"The happiness of the connubial union itself depends greatly on necessity, and when you touch this, you touch the keystone of the arch on which the wellbeing of society is founded. Look at the relation[2] of master and slave, that opprobrium, in the opinion of some gentlemen, to all civilised society and free government. Sir, there are few relations in life where friendships so strong and so lasting are formed as in that very relation. The slave knows that he is bound indissolubly to his master, and must, from necessity, remain always under his control. The master knows that he is bound to maintain and provide for his slave so long as he retains him in his possession. And each party accommodates himself to his situation. I have seen the dissolution of many friendships—such at least as were so called—but I have seen that of master and slave endure as long as there remained a drop of the blood of the master to which the slave could cleave."

The evil grew apace, corrupting rulers and ruled, introducing into one great section of American society the spirit of contempt for labour, tainting Religion, twisting even impartial Science till it assumed the magnitude of a problem round which all politics revolved,—became the main theme of

[1] "More than half of our ignorant blacks never heard of the French Revolution."—*Calhoun.*

[2] Remarkably anticipating the implied argument of Mr. Carlyle's *Ilias in Nuce.*

the oratory, of the agitation, of much of the literature of the age, and the cause of a second revolution, *a priori* more inevitable than the first.

When Madison's tenure of office expired, he was succeeded by MONROE, another Virginian, to whose mind the cession of Florida by Spain may have suggested the "Doctrine" associated with his name, that the stars and stripes should wave over the Continent from the pole to the isthmus. To his time also belonged the practical recognition of the South American Republics by the Panama Commission (1817), the Seminole war (1819), in which the arbitrary proceedings of Jackson evoked the philanthropic eloquence of Clay, and the notorious "Missouri Compromise."

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS,[1] the sixth President, combined eminence in letters and in statesmanship to a degree unusual even in his country—a country where literary distinction has been a readier passport to political promotion than in any other, since the patrons of our Augustan age conciliated the support of the wits by pension or by place. Born in 1767, he was, at an early age, sent to school at Paris (where his father was joint commissioner with Franklin), and then to Leyden. After some public service in Russia, he travelled to London, and there listened to the great orators of our most oratorical age. Returning to complete his curriculum at Harvard, he delivered (1793) one of the most florid of the somewhat tiresome Independence Orations. After a second residence abroad, as minister to the Netherlands and to Berlin, he was in 1803 sent to the Massachusetts Senate, and appointed Professor of Rhetoric in his University. Later he, as State Secretary, for eight years led the cabinet of Monroe, whom in 1825 he succeeded. Quincy Adams was, according to the "laudatores temporis acti," "the last of the great Presidents." The element of truth in this lies in his having been the last link

[1] Son of John Adams, the second President.

in the line of the leaders of the Revolution, and the last whose elevation was due, in part, to general culture and continental experience. His Presidency is marked by no great measure, but it welcomed the old La Fayette revisiting the scene of his young enthusiasms, and saw the deaths on the same day (the great anniversary, 4th July 1826) of the last of the veterans, his father and Jefferson. Adams has a distinct claim to be remembered in literature, though not for the highest work. His numerous occasional discourses, biographical sketches and eulogies, published together as *Lives of Celebrated Statesmen*, his translations and forgotten verses, amongst them an epic poem, testify to his aspiration if not his inspiration. As a politician, he was of the pronounced New England type—protectionist, but setting his face against corruption; humanitarian, resisting in his later days with hereditary zeal the encroachments of the slave power; and, on the whole, an advocate of peace, his last word in the Senate, where he died in February 1848, being "No," to a vote of thanks to the soldiers in the Mexican war. He was a man of varied talent, of no genius, and ever sanguine, as is seen by these sentences of his Address, beyond the event:—

"Our political creed is without a dissenting voice that can be heard. That the will of the people is the source and the happiness of the people—the end of all legitimate government upon earth; that the best security for the beneficence, and the best guarantee against the abuse of power, consists in the freedom, the purity, and the frequency of popular elections; that the general government of the Union and the separate governments of the States are all sovereignties of limited powers—fellow-servants of the same masters—uncontrolled within their respective spheres . . . that the policy of our country is peace, and the ark of our salvation union;—are articles of faith on which we are now all agreed. Ten years of peace at home and abroad have assuaged the animosities of political contention, and blended into harmony the most discordant elements of public opinion."

Never was there a time of more disagreement about the "respective spheres," or a country where the "discordant elements" were growing more dangerous. "We are," said a less

optimistic orator[1] of the same date, "literally opening a Pandora's box of political evils which, when they have gone abroad, will not even leave hope at the bottom." These dangers became conspicuous under the successor of the well-meaning Puritan President, his opposite in politics and in character. History proves nothing more fraught with peril to a nation's liberty than military renown acquired in its service. The patriots of the Revolution being men of disinterested motives and unblemished character, the framers of the Constitution paid insufficient heed to the possible abuses of power. There was no risk of Washington or Adams, of Hamilton or Madison, hardly even of Jefferson, betraying the faith of the people for purposes of personal aggrandisement.

General ANDREW JACKSON was cast in a meaner mould. The first of the strictly self-made men, "too proud of their makers," attaining to eminence in the New World, he, at an early period of his career, manifested the resolute, imperious, and unscrupulous spirit by which it was throughout distinguished. Born in a Carolina log-hut, he led a reckless youth, and never attained to any degree of culture; but he soon displayed great versatility as well as force of character. After shouldering a musket, as a boy, in the War of Independence, he studied law, in the rough way frequent in districts where natural shrewdness went for more than profound learning, became an attorney at Nashville and a judge in Tennessee, whence, in 1796, he was sent to Congress. After distinguishing himself as a soldier, in the Creek war of 1813-14, he achieved his great popular triumph, in January 1815, by the defence of New Orleans, where, however, his enforcement and haughty administration of martial-law

[1] Robert Y. Hayne (afterwards Governor of South Carolina, Calhoun's right-hand and opponent of Webster), in an able speech against Clay's Tariff, of April 1824.

brought him into difficulties.[1] Three years later (1818) the same domineering qualities appeared in his treatment, alike of Indians, Spanish, and English in the Seminole war—conduct which nearly led to his impeachment: but Jackson, relying on his victories, and appealing to the populace, as Jefferson had appealed to the people, came unscathed from the crisis; and, in 1824, as candidate for the Presidency, had the largest number of votes, though, from his failing to secure the requisite majority, Quincy Adams was, by the House of Representatives, appointed over his head. On the next occasion he was successful, and being re-elected in 1832, he, during his double term of office, threatened to become despotic. "There has been," says Mr. Hill Burton, "no statesman from whom, had opportunity served him, the constitution of the States was likely to run so much risk." The country was at peace, and the resolution of his antagonists kept his aggressions within limits; but he interposed the Veto without consulting, as was the previous practice, the leaders of either House, and, by lavishly exercising his power of nominating office-bearers, introduced the most detestable system of corruption ever known in a civilised country. This dangerous power, entrusted to the earlier Presidents with a view of their removing, with a minimum of scandal,[2] untrustworthy or incompetent persons, had never been seriously abused, till, in 1828, Jackson, without giving any reason for the change, dismissed all the Federal employés, and in 1832 the State judges, to make room for his own political partisans. This action, possibly within his technical rights, but in violation of the spirit of the Constitution, carried through in the teeth of the protests of the patriots and leading statesmen of the time, first distinctly established what is termed by its defenders the "principle of rotation," more popularly and correctly known as the "prin-

[1] In this as in other features of his career and character anticipating the more recently famous General Butler.

[2] *V.* Notes on Corruption and Presidential Powers at the end of vol.

ciple of the spoils." The President maintained that "the tenure of office could not even by law be so regulated that the public officers should not be removable at his pleasure." He claimed and exercised the right of the wholesale appointment, on his installation, of every consul, customs-collector, and postmaster in the range of the Federation. In the downward course, such awards came to be pre-promised to adherents on the eve of every election. Profligate pledges to hunters after place or power, and those desperately clinging by them, became the strongest motives to the caucus organisers, wire-pullers, and stump orators of nominations. This pestilent prerogative, filched from the inadvertence of the original Convention, and destined to be a new guiding force in the State, was not limited by its influence over actual nominees. It corrupted their predecessors, who, finding no security of tenure in the most laborious services, no allowance to experience often painfully acquired, or favour to skill purchased by the sacrifice of extraneous opportunities, commonly concluded that honesty was the worst policy, and, by organised exactions, made hay while the sun shone. Yet worse, hope and desire grovelled for advancement: whenever one attained to the sweets of office, ten rogues or flatterers had debased themselves in struggling for it; the servility of hundreds was wasted, and a dishonourable spirit was spread over the nation. What wonder that the incorruptible though fanatical Calhoun spoke of the system as "a loathsome and dangerous disease," under the spread of which "the honours and emoluments of this government . . . will be reserved only for those who have qualified themselves by political prostitution for admission into the Magdalen Asylum!" Scarce less sternly wrote his great rival—[1]

"It is generally true that he who controls another man's means of

[1] Webster on *The Appointing and Removing Power*, Feb. 16, 1835.

living controls his will. Where there are favours to be granted, there are generally enough to solicit for them ; and when favours once granted may be withdrawn at pleasure, there is ordinarily little security for personal independence of character. The power of giving office thus affects the fears of all who are in and the hopes of all who are out. . . . They resolve not to be outdone in any of the works of partisanship. . . . A competition ensues not of patriotic labours—not of rough and severe toils for the public good, not of manliness, independence, and public spirit, but of complaisance, of indiscriminate support of executive measures, of pliant servility and gross adulation. All throng and rush to the altar of man-worship, and there they offer sacrifices and pour out libations till the thick fumes of their incense turn their own heads and turn also the head of him who is the object of their idolatry. . . . For these reasons I am for arresting the farther progress of this executive patronage, if we can arrest it. I am for staying the farther contagion of this plague."

The plague was not stayed: the corruption in its track has been the main mark for every recent satirist from Lowell, through Artemus Ward, to the author of *Democracy*, till it has been possible for an otherwise sympathetic foreign observer to declare, "The office-seekers have become janizaries, inspired solely by the love of pelf, carried to place by chicanery, and expelling all high-minded men from politics. The environs of the White-House are the most discreditable corners in America." Other great questions came to the front and hustled aside the demand for political reform. The cause of liberty, for which Lincoln fell, had to be fought and won before the cause of political purity, of which Garfield has been the martyr.

To realise, even in the limited measure possible to our space, the controversies round which much of the graver literature of the age revolved, we must consider the changes that had already passed over the national life in the first thirty years of the century. The America of President Jackson was already almost as far separated from that of Washington as the America of the present day is from the America of Jackson. The number of the States had risen from thirteen to twenty-four. The population, itself of rapid growth, and

fed by tides of immigration, had crossed the Ohio and the Mississippi, and multiplied itself four-fold.[1] Its outposts were spreading along the lakes; and fresh Territories (to the dismay of those whose political ideal was a comparatively small and compact community) were, in every decade, demanding admittance to the Union. The Indian tribes, yielding to the destiny, of which the novelist Cooper and contemporary poets are the sympathetic recorders, were slowly, sometimes reluctantly, but steadily, retreating to the wilds of the West. Louisiana had been purchased from France, Florida ceded by Spain. Great public works, as the Erie Canal, and magnificent roads, had begun to serve as highways between the different regions of this already vast communion. The region of the Rocky Mountains was yet an unknown land, and the foreign element, save that represented by the descendants of the Dutch, was still inconsiderable. But three great sectional interests, not always harmonious, were already calling for adjustment: that of the Northern Seaboard, that of the Centre (mainly New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio), and that of the South, the most extensive in territory but scantiest in population. In the first section and in New York city were the germs of one of the three great FORCES of American social life, the manufacturing and commercial PLUTOCRACY—politically characterised by a love of order, centralisation, and stability, respect for the rights of property, combined with the historical sense of a personal equality. The comparatively inland centre was the headquarters of the more thoroughgoing DEMOCRATIC spirit, possessed with the idea of the rights and dignity of labour, moderately jealous of the central power, and less averse than their eastern neighbours to extension of territory. The Southern ARISTOCRACY, on the other hand, was in no sense of the word truly democratic. As time went on they held more and more firmly by their

[1] In 1850 it had multiplied six, now thirteen-fold.

"peculiar institution," and began to cherish the idea of an absolute difference of privileges determined by rank and race. The pertinacious upholders of State rights, they were prepared to push their jealousies of the central power to the verge of disunion.

It has been remarked that POLITICAL PARTIES are made up of intersections of national forces, allied for some definite purpose, and that the faculty to arrange these combinations is a great part of statesmanship. In reality they are apt to arrange themselves, according to methods which, being indefinable, are called instinctive. American party names, strangely changing their meaning with strange coalitions, are an endless source of bewilderment to English readers. On the term of Madison's Presidency the old lines of demarcation between the Federalists and the popular party were obliterated. The association of aristocratic feeling with a desire to strengthen the central power, represented by Hamilton, no longer existed. The latter side of the old Federal feeling was the guiding principle of the new REPUBLICAN, otherwise known as the WHIG party (the term Tory in the New World having been applied to the old Royalists), while the more or less oligarchic South, uniting with a section of the Northern democracy, constituted the so-called DEMOCRATIC party. The strife of those two on home and foreign affairs is a great part of the political history of the States during the last fifty years. It hinged mainly on four great controversies:—those relating to Extension of the Union; to the Establishment of Public Institutions—especially of a National Bank; to the imposition of General Tariffs; and to the question of Slavery. Speaking generally, and with allowance for eccentricities of individual action, due sometimes to patriotic, sometimes to personal motives, the Republicans supported Federal institutions and high Tariffs. They were opposed to an aggressive policy, to an extension of territory, and especially,

having their headquarters in the North, to everything tending to an aggrandisement of the slave power.

After the era of Jackson and his *protégé* and successor, Van-Buren, the Presidents play a minor part in the internal history of the times. As a rule mere nominees, none of them, from that date till the installation of Abraham Lincoln, were men of very marked individual force. Harrison, the hope of the Whigs, died after a month of office: General Taylor's talents were all displayed on the field: with more or less of mediocre ability, Tyler, Polk, Fillmore, Pierce, and Buchanan represented the parties which, with more or less honesty, they had courted and canvassed. The vital history of the period is concentrated in the Abolition movement in the North, represented by Garrison, and in the eloquence and statesmanship of the three great American orators of the first half of the century—CALHOUN, CLAY, and WEBSTER. To understand their attitude it has been necessary to give this summary sketch of contemporary politics. In the careers of all three there are inconsistencies. They all changed their opinions, as the most intelligent and independent men must do, with a change of circumstance. None was wholly free from the influence of personal ambition. They were all candidates for the Presidency, which no one of them attained. Of the first and last it has been fairly said, each "had too much inherent greatness to reach" an office so dependent on the popular breath; and each in turn was ousted by a more pliant competitor. They were all perhaps over-exalted by their admirers; all had strength of character enough to incur and to brave the invectives of envy or fanaticism. They were at one in their resistance to the aggressions of the Executive, and in their protests against the system of corruption which Andrew Jackson passed on to his successors.

They were almost exact contemporaries. Clay, the elder

by five years, born in Virginia 1777, settled as a lawyer in Kentucky, entered Congress along with Calhoun in 1811, and died, with Webster, in 1852. Calhoun, born with Webster in 1782, died in 1850. They were at one in defence of the war of 1812-14, though Webster, averse to inland campaigns, insisted on the Themistoclean rule, "stick to the sea." They agreed in desiring to restrict the excessive privileges of the Bank, of which, under amended rules, Webster afterwards became the champion. They were all at first in favour of internal improvements, the extension of national highways, etc.; which, as tending to centralisation, afterwards roused the jealousy of the extreme State-right party. They joined in arraigning the arbitrary executions of the Seminole war; and Calhoun remained neutral on the questions of recognising the Greeks (1824) and the South American Republics (1826), the themes of some of the most impassioned speeches of his rivals. In other respects they were opposed as contraries, and two of them as contradictories. The strategical skill and persistence of the South is conspicuous in the fact that Henry—otherwise "Compromise"—Clay, with a strong bias to the Republican party, was driven, in his *rôle* of mediator, time after time, to propose and carry measures satisfactory to the Democracy. His quick thought, fluent speech, and winning voice having at once made him popular, he was on his election made Speaker of the House of Representatives, and, as one of the Commissioners to Ghent, helped to arrange the terms of peace. The year 1820 is memorable by his first great compromise, in terms of which, Calhoun acceding, Missouri was admitted as a Slave State, on condition that henceforth the line of 36° 30′ should be the northern limit of the system. In 1824 he carried his Tariff Bill. After a period of retreat from public life, devoted to his profession, he was (1831) chosen one of the senators for his State, when he led the opposition against Jackson, fought for the Bank,

and in 1834 effected his second compromise, the *ad valorem* Tariff Bill, which enabled South Carolina to make a dignified retreat from her defiant attitude. Defeated by Harrison (1839), Clay, in 1842, made his famous valedictory address to the Senate; but he returned to that body in 1849, to advocate and carry his third great compromise (1850), the Free California and Fugitive Slave Bill. All his important measures were passed, but, as is the fate of makeshifts, none of them were final. Contemporaries speak of his oratory—of which we have had a sufficient example — in high-flown terms. "Of the triumvirate respectively representing the South, the East, and the West, the last was the master of feeling. His frank bearing and spontaneous eloquence reached the heart of the whole country. While Calhoun engaged the attention of philosophers in his study, and Webster had the ear of lawyers and the mercantile classes, Clay was out in the open air with the people, exciting at will their sympathies, while the warmest acts of friendship poured upon him unsought." The tribute of a partisan must be qualified, but we can believe that Clay's simple and direct manner was more effective, with the masses, than subtle thought or solid historical appeal. On the other hand, his rivals have more enduring names. Of the two great forces of the Continent, Centripetal and Centrifugal—the one complaining of lawlessness, aggression, disloyalty, and isolated claims of rank or clime; the other of despotism, timidity, the *force majeur* of mere numbers, the insolence of upstart wealth—Webster and Calhoun were, by birth, surrounding, and character, the most pronounced representatives. The former, born in the Wilderness of New Hampshire, trained under the New England school system, most of his life a Boston lawyer, was an American first, a man of the North in the second place. The latter, son of a small planter, brought up from the cradle to politics, was a local statesman first, a patriot afterwards:

he cared very little for the "United States:" in his mind "The Star-spangled Banner" was of no account as compared with the crescent of South Carolina. A home-ruler from his youth, he made no secret of his disregard for the authority of the central government, saying, in 1812, to Commodore Stewart, "We are essentially aristocratic . . . when we cease to control this nation through a disjointed democracy we shall then resort to dissolution of the Union." "The Union," on the other hand, was from first to last Webster's ruling passion. To preserve it intact he was prepared to sacrifice almost every other principle: its friends were his friends, its enemies his enemies. He disliked equally the nullifiers of the South, and what, among his latest utterances, he called "the din, and roll, and rub-a-dub of Abolition writers and Abolition lecturers." He was content, if he could achieve his end of cementing extremes within the bounds of the Constitution, to endure the rancour of both. The refrain of the peroration of his great speech of 1830, "Liberty and Union, now and for ever, one and indivisible"—set to music by Holmes in his verses, *Keep us, O keep us, the Many in One*—is the refrain of his life. Webster followed Hamilton in holding the Central Power to be "the rock of political salvation," and wishing to give permanence to Federal Institutions and Dignitaries,—as the Supreme Judicial Court and the National Bank. He promoted national enterprises; but, the dispersive tendencies of democracy being repugnant to his ideas of good government and order, he set himself against extension of territory, declaring: "I believe it to be for the interest and happiness of the whole Union to remain as it is, without diminution and without addition." He admitted the sovereignty of the States, as recognised by law, but interpreted every doubtful phrase on the side of concentration and consolidation.

"Calhoun," says the Observer[1] to whom we have before referred, "in all respects antithetic—in political action, in intellect, in entire mental organisation—stood on this ground, 'State sovereignty first, the essential basis of enduring union.' He tested every policy by its bearings on this cardinal maxim, and probably, through his personal relations with the South, he seemed at particular crises in danger of running into exaggerated statement and applications of it. The repeated collisions of these two eminent men are interesting to us, at a distance, as the conflict of rare intelligences must always be; but starting as they did from points of view diametrically opposite,—the one seeing the golden, the other the white side of the shield,—there could be no conclusion. Their weapons were as diverse. Calhoun's intellect was pre-eminently logical; he revelled in subtilties: his speeches are close unrelenting deductions from assumed first principles—all his tendencies are discursive. The argument of his opponent, on the other hand, consisted of an orderly array of forcible but simple statements, a magnificent piling up of appeals to common sense, to the instincts and sentiments, the imagination, the aspirations and prejudices of his auditory: nor, if measured by his power to rivet attention and to command admiration, has any speaker of modern times been more triumphant. As to the award of oratory, there might be no ground for hesitation, but practical success seldom went along with it. Eloquence had its fame, yet the substantial fruits of these conflicts generally fell to the Democracy."

Daniel Webster came to Congress, in 1813, with the already made reputation of a local orator (having as early as 1800, in his college at Dartmouth, been chosen to deliver a 4th of July speech), and at once attracted attention, one of his fellow representatives making a remark characteristic of the standard of the time—"The North has not his equal nor the South his superior." But his first speech of national celebrity was that, delivered January 1824, for the Creeks; his second, in 1826, in favour of the Panama Mission, in which occurs the famous appeal to the spirit of Montezuma and the Incas, to watch the "solemn retribution that now visits the once proud monarchy of Spain," and his reference to the liberty of the new Southern republics achieved by looking "steadily in every adversity to the great Northern light." The debates which brought him forward as an authority on matters of currency, so high as to

[1] Notes of J. P. N., 1850.

be quoted in this country by Lord Overstone, gave less scope for brilliant passages; but they exhibit him, on another side, as a clear and consecutive reasoner and shrewd man of business. Out of these discussions arose one of his greatest efforts. In 1832 Jackson used his veto against a renewal of the Bank Charter, and next year proposed to remove from it the deposits of public moneys: a resolution was passed by the Senate disapproving of the measure, whereupon the President issued a high-handed Protest against the resolution. Webster, on constitutional grounds, arraigned the Protest, in a speech which, according to Chancellor Kent, "surpassed everything in simplicity and beauty . . . in clearness, in rebuke, in glowing feeling, in just and profound views, in critical severity and matchless strength. It is worth millions to our liberty." The following passage, less known in the country to which it pays so grand a tribute, is a commonplace of rhetorical school-books in the West:—

"It was against the recital of an Act of Parliament, rather than against any suffering under its enactments, that our fathers took up arms. They went to war against a preamble. They fought seven years against a declaration. They poured out their treasures and their blood like water in a contest against an assertion, which those less sagacious and not so well schooled in the principles of civil liberty would have regarded as barren phraseology or mere parade of words. They saw in the claim of the British Parliament a seminal principle of mischief, the germ of unjust power; they detected it, dragged it forth from underneath its plausible disguises, struck at it; nor did it elude either their steady eye or their well-directed blow till they had extirpated and destroyed it, to the smallest fibre. On this question of principle, while actual suffering was yet afar off, they raised their flag against a power, to which, for purposes of foreign conquest and subjugation, Rome, in the height of her glory, is not to be compared; a power which has dotted over the surface of the whole globe with her possessions and military posts, whose morning drum-beat, following the sun and keeping company with the hours, circles the earth with one continuous and unbroken strain of the martial airs of England."

Nothing in politics is so strange as the rapid shifting of personal combinations. Six months before this speech was

delivered, Webster and Jackson were in close alliance against Calhoun. The first antagonism of the rival orators is another surprise. In 1816 the North-Eastern States were still relying on their foreign trade, and Webster opposed the Tariff Bill as an over-concession to Pennsylvania and the Middle States. The South was still hoping to become a seat of manufactures, and Calhoun supported it. There seems no ground for the imputations of dishonesty that have been thrown on both. Abstract questions of political economy apart, these statesmen had to consider what they held to be for the good of their country, and, in a matter of expediency, might naturally give the first place to the desires and interests of their special constituencies. In any case, ten years later, they clean shifted sides. Daniel Webster had become as staunch a Protectionist as Henry Clay, and John C. Calhoun as vehement a Free-Trader as Mr. John Bright. Elevating the question into one of principle, Calhoun, in his famous "Exposition" of 1828, made it his first lever towards the Disunion on which he was bent. He denounced the Tariff as an arbitrary burden laid by the manufacturing on the agricultural States, and maintained the right of the latter to resist, by declaring "nul and void" the oppressive Acts. The controversy, thus incited, came to its first head in January 1830, when Colonel R. Y. Hayne of South Carolina, acting for his leader, made a speech on a Bill about Public Lands, in which he accused the Government of partial administration, and stirred up State jealousies. An oratorical duel ensued between him and Webster, in the course of which the latter made one of his greatest speeches. The following passages illustrate his manner of patriotic appeal:—

"I shall not acknowledge that the honourable member goes before me in regard for whatever of distinguished talent, or distinguished character, South Carolina has produced. I claim part of the honour, I partake in the pride, of her great names. I claim them for countrymen, one and all, the Laurenses, the Rutledges, the Pinckneys, the

Sumpters, the Marions, Americans all, whose fame is no more to be hemmed in by State lines than their talents and patriotism were capable of being circumscribed within the same narrow limits. In their day and generation they served and honoured the country, and the whole country; and their renown is of the treasures of the whole country. Him whose honoured name the gentleman himself bears, does he esteem me less capable of gratitude for his patriotism, or sympathy for his sufferings, than if his eyes had first opened upon the light of Massachusetts instead of South Carolina? Sir, does he suppose it in his power to exhibit a Carolina name so bright as to produce envy in my bosom? No, sir, increased gratification and delight, rather. I thank God that if I am gifted with little of the spirit which is able to raise mortals to the skies, I have yet none, as I trust, of that other spirit which would drag angels down. When I shall be found, sir, in my place here in the Senate, or elsewhere, to sneer at public merit, because it happens to spring up beyond the little limits of my own State or neighbourhood; when I refuse for any such cause, or for any cause, the homage due to American talent or elevated patriotism, to sincere devotion to liberty and the country; or, if I see an uncommon endowment of heaven, if I see extraordinary capacity and virtue in any son of the South, and if, moved by local prejudice or gangrened by State jealousy, I get up here to abate the tithe of a hair from his just character and just fame, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth!

"Sir, let me recur to pleasing recollections; let me indulge in refreshing remembrance of the past; let me remind you that, in early times, no States cherished greater harmony, both of principle and feeling, than Massachusetts and South Carolina. Would to God that harmony might again return! Shoulder to shoulder they went through the Revolution, hand in hand they stood round the administration of Washington, and felt his own great arm lean on them for support. Unkind feeling—if it exist—alienation, and distrust, are the growth, unnatural to such soils, of false principles since sown. They are weeds, the seeds of which that same great arm never scattered.

"Mr. President, I shall enter on no encomium upon Massachusetts; she needs none. Her history the world knows. The past, at least, is secure. . . . The bones of her sons, falling in the great struggle for independence, now lie mingled with the soil of every State from New England to Georgia; and there they will lie for ever. And, sir, where American liberty raised its first voice, and where its youth was nurtured and sustained, there it still lives, in the strength of its manhood and full of its original spirit. If discord and disunion shall wound it, if party strife and blind ambition shall hawk at and tear it, if folly and madness, if uneasiness under salutary and necessary restraint, shall succeed in separating it from that Union by which alone its existence is made sure, it will stand in the end by the side of that cradle in which its infancy was rocked; it will stretch forth its arms with whatever of vigour it may still retain over the friends who gather round it; and it

will fall at last, if fall it must, amidst the proudest monuments of its own glory, and on the very spot of its origin."

We are told that "Senators shed tears like girls" over this harangue. Edward Everett said it was "like Demosthenes on the Crown." It was printed, and hailed over the country as an overthrow of all heresies that threatened the Union. But Calhoun was undismayed, and in 1832 he prevailed on the State Convention of South Carolina to issue the famous Ordinance of Nullification. President Jackson who, from the otherwise opposite side, joined hands with Webster for the Union, at once made preparations for war, sent cannon and ships to Charleston, and issued a proclamation threatening to arrest every leader of the seditious movement, which was thus temporarily suppressed. But next year, on the introduction of a Bill called the Force Bill, to make provision for the collection of the revenue, Calhoun returned to the charge, and delivered in the Senate his most characteristic speech, of which the following are the most memorable paragraphs :—

"Is this a Federal union? . . . The very language which we are compelled to use when speaking of our political institutions affords proof conclusive as to its real character. They all imply a combination of sovereignties, a confederation of States. They are never applied to an association of individuals. . . . Nor is the other point less clear—that our system is a union of twenty-four sovereign powers, under a constitutional compact, and not a divided sovereignty between the States severally and the United States. . . . Sovereignty is in its nature indivisible. It is the supreme power of a State, and we might just as well speak of half a square or half of a triangle as of half a sovereignty. It is a gross error to confound the *exercise* of sovereign powers with sovereignty itself, or the *delegation* of such powers with the surrender of them."

In answer to the frequent charge of being metaphysical, he contrasts "the contemptible scholastic refinement which makes distinctions without a difference" and "the power of analysis and combination which is the highest attribute of the human mind," and proceeds—

"It is said that the Bill ought to pass, because the law must be

enforced. . . . The imperial edict must be executed! It is under such sophistry, couched in general terms, without looking to the limitations which must ever exist in the practical exercise of power, that the most cruel and despotic acts ever have been covered. . . . The Act imposing 'the tea-tax must be executed.' This was the very argument which impelled Lord North and his administration to that mad career which for ever separated us from the British crown. Under a similar sophistry that 'religion must be protected,' how many massacres have been perpetrated, and how many martyrs have been tied to the stake. . . . Are you prepared to enforce a law without considering whether it be just or unjust, constitutional or unconstitutional. . . . We are told that the Union must be preserved without regard to the means. And how is it proposed to preserve the Union? By force. Does any man in his senses believe that this beautiful structure—this harmonious aggregate of States, produced by the joint consent of all—can be preserved by force. Its very introduction will be certain destruction to this Federal Union. . . . Force may indeed hold the parts together; but such union would be the bond between master and slave—a union of exaction on one side and unqualified obedience on the other. . . . This very bill is intended to collect what can no longer be called taxes—the voluntary contribution of a free people—but tribute—tribute to be collected under the mouths of the cannon. . . . I tell you plainly that the Bill, should it pass, cannot be enforced. It will prove only a blot on your statute book, a reproach to the year, and a disgrace to the American Senate. It will not be executed: it will rouse the dormant spirit of the people, and open their eyes to the approach of despotism. The perversion of the taxing power has given precisely the same control to the Northern section over the industry of the Southern section of the Union which the power to regulate commerce gave to Great Britain over the industry of the colonies; the very articles in which the colonies were permitted to have a free-trade and those in which the mother country had a monopoly, are the same as those in which the Southern States are permitted to have a free-trade by the Act of 1832, and in which the Northern States have by the same Act secured a monopoly. The controversy is one between power and liberty; and I tell the gentlemen who are opposed to me that, strong as may be the love of power on their side, the love of liberty is still stronger on ours."

This argument sums up, anticipates, and renders superfluous alike the rhetoric and reasoning on behalf of the South, on both sides of the Atlantic, during the Civil war. Webster's reply, the text of which is "the States not Sovereign," is equally exhaustive on the other side. It is a greater effort than his answer to Hayne, more closely logical and more conclusive, though affording fewer passages adapted for quota-

tion. The controversy in regard to the Tariff, so far as it threatened the Union, was closed by Clay's compromise of 1834. Calhoun changed his front of attack to the question of Slavery, which he now set forth as a natural institution, and succeeded in obtaining for it "concession after concession." Webster, after a triumphal progress through the provinces, as the saviour of the Union, unsuccessfully contested the Presidency, and spent the spring of 1839 in England, Scotland, and France. In the course of this tour he formed with Lord Ashburton a friendship that proved of value when, as Secretary of State under Harrison and Tyler, he negotiated with that nobleman the "Treaty of Washington," settling the boundaries of Maine. The Oregon question was, five years later, adjusted on the same lines. Meanwhile, Texas, having become an independent State, desired admission to the Union. This was opposed by the North, and supported by the South, as an obvious accession of strength to the slave power. In the struggle Webster and Clay were defeated, Polk was elected President, and the Mexican war followed, with its vast results—the extension of the Union to the Pacific, and the colonisation in 1848 of the newly-discovered gold-fields of California. These great acquisitions again raised "the burning question," Calhoun with his last breath protesting against any encroachment on the right of new States to decide on their own "domestic institutions." Webster stood resolutely on his ground against the extension of the area of slavery. He urged its abolition in the district of Columbia, but held that the Constitution gave no further powers. In this spirit is conceived his last considerable speech in the Senate, that of March 7, 1850, entitled by himself "For the Constitution and the Union," in which he accepts and defends the Compromise Bill. It was the last occasion on which his great rival, to whom he was shortly after called on to pay a generous tribute, was present

to hear him. Webster gave a stirring address in 1852 to the men of Boston in Faneuil Hall, and died in the autumn of the same year. As a lawyer he was in his day only surpassed by the great jurists, Kent and Story; as a forensic pleader he had no equal. His triumphs at the Bar are worthy of a place beside his triumphs in the Senate. There are few *causes célèbres* more thrilling than that of the trial of the Knapps for the murder of Joseph White, nor any passages in our legal literature more striking than this:—

"Gentlemen, it is a most extraordinary case. In some respects it has hardly a precedent anywhere; certainly none in our New England history. This bloody drama excited no suddenly-exerted, ungovernable rage. The actors in it were not surprised by a lion-like temptation springing upon their virtue, and overcoming it before resistance could begin. Nor did they do the deed to glut savage vengeance or satiate long-settled or deadly hate. It was a cool, calculating, money-making murder. It was all hire and salary, not revenge. It was the weighing of money against life; the counting out of so many pieces of silver against so many ounces of blood. . . . The circumstances now clearly in evidence spread out the whole scene before us. . . . A healthful old man, to whom sleep was sweet, the first sound slumbers of the night held him in their soft but strong embrace. The assassin enters through the window already prepared . . . with noiseless foot he paces the lonely hall, winds up the stairs to the door of the chamber, moves the lock till it turns on its hinges without noise: the beams of the moon resting on the gray locks show him where to strike. . . . The victim passes without a struggle to the repose of death. It is the assassin's purpose to make sure work; and he plies the dagger, though it is obvious that life has been destroyed by the blow of the bludgeon. He raises the aged arm that he may not fail in his aim at the heart, and replaces it again over the wounds of the poignard. He explores the wrist for the pulse, and ascertains that it beats no longer. It is accomplished. The deed is done! He retraces his steps to the window and escapes. . . . No eye has seen him, no ear has heard him. The secret is his own, and it is safe! Ah! gentlemen, that was a dreadful mistake . . . such secrets of guilt are never safe from detection even by men."

But here, as elsewhere, extracts are apt to give the rhetoric without the reasoning. The terrible power of the speech and its main interest lies in the winding of the chain of evidence link by link, coil on coil, round the murderer and his accom-

plices. One seems to hear the bones of the victims crack as under the grasp of a boa-constrictor. Webster swayed his juries more surely than he led the Senate, and as an advocate almost always won his case. He did not affect open-air platforms, like Clay or O'Connell; no man was more free from the reproach of being a demagogue, or setting class against class; but in his numerous "progresses" through the Union he did not always resist the temptation, that besets every orator, to elicit the applause, by appealing to the self-complacency as well as to the sympathies, of his audience. Every place where he goes, be it Buffalo or Pittsburgh, New Hampshire or Indiana, is made to appear for the moment, if not the "centre of civilisation," at least its fairest frontier. Those eulogiums are indeed marked by a genuine patriotic glow, and the dignity that belongs to every utterance of a commanding mind; but their example may have tended to encourage the troop of Elijah Pograms and Cyrus Chokes,[1] and the screamers of Tammany Hall. The art of making commemorative speeches, technically called "Orations," has been cultivated in America to excess. Beginning with the addresses of the Revolution time,—designed to inflame the zeal of a nation actually at war,—the practice has been maintained by the pride of three generations, and the fluency of a people who, as a rule, speak better than they write. It is scarce an exaggeration to say that every "first boy" of his year, at Harvard, begins to practise for public life by "orating" at large on one or other of the long since threadbare themes—"The Landing of the Pilgrims," "The Boston Massacre," "The

[1] "I address you on behalf of the Watertoast Association, as it watches your noble efforts in the cause of Freedom." At the name of Freedom, and at every repetition of that name, all the sympathisers roared aloud, cheering with nine times nine. Later in the proceedings "it was resolved that a piece of plate should be presented to a certain Patriot who had declared from his high place in the Legislature that he and his friends would hang without trial any Abolitionist who might pay them a visit."—DICKENS.

Character of Washington," "Bunker Hill" (from which some etymologists would derive the word bunkum), and "The Anniversary of American Independence." Many of these compositions have given the first promise of eminence afterwards realised; others are mere juvenile "spread-eagleism." But the efflorescence of patriotism is not confined to one side of the Atlantic; and, in hour of trial, the youth of America have done as much as that of England or of Scotland to show that tall talk may be followed by brave deeds. In this kind of composition Webster excelled. He began with it at college: he all but closed with it at Washington; his last speech but one being (4th July 1851) on the laying of the corner-stone of the addition to the Capitol. Such themes were adapted for the display of his panoramic grasp of history, his thorough appreciation of character, and the unaffected enthusiasm for everything great—qualities equally conspicuous in his celebration of "Adams and Jefferson," "gone down together with slow-descending, grateful, long-lingering light," and in the range of his mind's eye over the "mighty rivers flowing in solitary grandeur" through the trackless wastes of Ohio.

I have dwelt on the career of the grandest post-Revolution figure of the New World, because his work is less known in England than that of any other great American. In a country whose intellectual *forte* is oratory he surpasses all other orators.

"Quantum lenta solent inter viburna cupressi."

More than this, his place among English-speaking orators is in the front rank. True, his style has traces of the exaggeration characteristic of almost all young countries, and the haste, to which we have referred as one of the attributes of his own. It superabounds in classical allusions and poetical quotations (a fashion common to the closing years of the last and early years of this century in Great Britain, France, and

Germany); its imagery is profuse, here and there florid. In Webster's pages, as in those of most orators, we have platitudes side by side with passages of real power, and we are made alive to his want of true humour by his lack of reticence. But beneath all the verbiage there is constantly present to us a man of realities, of pith and power and catholic sympathies enough to make us forget the cavils of superfine critics, with no more energy than mantelpiece ornaments, whose one idea is to make pedestals to themselves by smoothing sentences. Under the "barbaric pearl and gold" there is a buff jerkin: the flowers make summer over a block of Puritan granite. Webster, fed on strong meat—the Bible, Homer, and Milton—is always strong, always clear. His six volumes can be read with little fatigue, and relished for instruction as well as heat: though superfluent, he never brings in bombast to plaster lack of knowledge or impotence of thought. His arguments on the currency and on points of law are often like Euclid's. One might pardon a compatriot were he to say that Webster adds the richness of Burke[1] to the clearness of Bright. His eloquence, everywhere massive, is not the mere record of half-forgotten strifes: it belongs to the permanent literature of his country, in whose political arena he was, during his prime, the most powerful actor.

Two leading ideas pervade it:—a historic sense of the great march of time, which enables him to summon back the shades of past generations, as to a martial muster; and the maintenance of the Union, by any sacrifice and at any hazard. Among his last words were—"I would rather hear of natural blasts and mildews, war, pestilence, and famine, than hear gentlemen talk of Secession. To break up this great Government! to dismember this glorious country! to astonish Europe with an act of folly such as Europe for two centuries has never beheld in any government or any people! No,

[1] I of course speak of Burke merely as an orator.

sir! No, sir! There will be no secession." It was the constant rallying cry of a great man's life, which began and ended between the struggle of the early Federation and that of the later Confederacy.

> "Ere from the fields, by valour won,
> The battle smoke had rolled away
> And bared the blood-red setting sun,
> His eyes were opened on the day.
>
> "His land was but a shelving strip,
> Black with the strife that made it free;
> He lived to see its banners dip
> Their fingers in the Western sea."

Among other eminent lawyers and speakers of the early part of the century we have only space to mention William Wirt, the biographer of Patrick Henry, and leading counsel against Aaron Burr in the trial of 1807, from whose speech the rather overwrought rhetorical passage about Blennerhassett is often quoted: William Pinkney, famous for his defence of the captors of the Nereide, into which he crowds an amazing mass of mythological imagery; also for his advocacy, in the following year, of the Tariff and his attack on the use made by the Executive of the Treaty-making Power: John Sergeant, whose eloquent anti-slavery speech of 1820 against the "Missouri Compromise" remarkably foreshadows the Civil War: and Henry W. Brackenridge, son of the judge, whose character he sketches with filial piety in his *Recollections of the West.* Of slightly later date was Webster's contemporary, friend, and biographer, EDWARD EVERETT. A younger brother of Alexander,—also a *littérateur*, speaker, and ambassador of distinction,—he was born near Boston in 1794, distinguished himself at Harvard, succeeded the eloquent preacher Buckminster, in his nineteenth, and was, in his twenty-first year, appointed Professor of Greek in his University. Subsequently he was, in accordance with a laudable American fashion, sent to Europe to recruit his

health and gain experience—a visit made more than usually memorable by his meeting Lord Byron in Italy, and carrying letters from him to Ali-Pacha in Greece. On his return, besides applying himself to the duties of his Chair, delivering numerous courses, and publishing a Greek Grammar, he acted as editor of the *North American Review*, to which he contributed upwards of a hundred articles in the space of a few years. Written in such haste, these are inevitably of unequal merit; but the best are marked by the ripe scholarship of one of the most cultivated minds the States had fostered up to his day. Everett, after serving for ten years as a useful member of Congress, was distinguished by the high dignities, gracefully worn, of Governor of Massachusetts, Minister to the Court of St. James, and President of Harvard. The elegant volume by which he is best remembered, twenty-seven "Orations," selected and published in 1836, shows his strength and weakness, his learning, frequent fancy, and fair judgment, on the one side; his ambition beyond his powers, early overtasked, on the other. Discoursing on a wide range of subjects—of which the refrains are America and Greece, the Mayflower, Patriotism, Reform, the Progress of Discovery, Concord, Lexington, and the inevitable Bunker Hill—these speeches are always able, but only by fits inspiring. They are "too long," and smell of the lamp. The writer exhausts his hearers by ransacking history and literature with an approach to pedantry. In his great address on the Republic, delivered August 26, 1824, before the Phi-Beta-Kappa Society, we have, at one opening of the book, the Parthenon, the Theseum, the Alexandrian and Periclean ages, Callimachus, Pindar, Lycophron, Sophocles, Aristotle, Aristophanes of Byzantium, Apollonius of Rhodes, Alcæus, Menander, Horace, Lucretius, Tacitus, Constantine, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Machiavelli, Guicciardini, Galileo, Ariosto, Tasso, Cervantes, Corneille, and Racine—all doubtless illustrating the orator's position,

but heaped up with bewildering rapidity. Everett's work, carefully elaborated and richly adorned, is that of the first of rhetoricians rather than a genuine orator. The following short passages are worth quoting as specimens of his style:—

"Luther might have written and preached in Latin to his dying day, and the elegant Italian scholars, champions of the Church, would have answered him in Latin better than his own; and with the mass of the people the whole affair would have been a contest between angry and loquacious priests. 'Awake all antiquity from the sleep of the libraries.' He awoke all Germany and half Europe from the scholastic sleep of an ignorance worse than death. He took into his hands not the oaten pipe of the classic muse; he moved to his great work, not

'to the Dorian mood
Of flutes and soft recorders.'

He grasped the iron trumpet of his mother tongue—the good old Saxon from which our own is descended, the language of noble thought and high resolve—and blew a blast that shook the nations from Rome to the Orkneys."

"When Greece ceased to be independent the forum and the stage became mute. The patronage of Macedonian, Alexandrian, and Pergamean princes was lavished in vain. They could not woo the healthy muses of Hellas from the cold mountain tops to dwell in their gilded halls. . . . Not a poet arose in Greece to chant her own elegy; and it is, after near three centuries, from Cicero and Sulpicius that we catch the first notes of pious and pathetic lamentation over the fallen land of the arts. The freedom and genius of a country are invariably gathered into a common tomb, and there

'can only strangers breathe
The name of that which was beneath.'"

In the eloquence of the Pulpit the West has from the first excelled. We have reached a period when, otherwise than in the Colonial days, Theology is no longer the main intellectual influence, and the study of its dogmas and their result become an object of departmental zeal and research: but Religion, the prime motive of thought in the New World, still holds its own as a power amid the contentions of politics and the claims of commerce. In no country has it more influence: in none are its formulæ more various. Methodism,

Catholicism, Mormonism, the aspirations of a vague philosophy and the vulgar excitements of a camp meeting, faith in revelation by raps, or conversion by rule of thumb, and the clear cold belief in Christianity as a mere practical life, have met under the same vast roof-tree of nations, and there is none that does not boast its soul-subduing, more or less inspired voice. In this dispersion of the original stream, the orthodox Puritanism of Connecticut came down from Eliot and Edwards, through Dwight to Hodge, and the Princeton Essays: it was represented in a somewhat modified form by Samuel Hopkins. Elsewhere, elements of scepticism, of various dye, —attributed by some to the influence of Payne and the French officers in the two wars, by others to the mere gradual growth of opinion—were manifesting themselves. In the New England pulpits especially, a new body of preachers sprang up, who, without directly arraigning any of the "points of faith," passed them by, like Burns's friends the Scotch moderates, and confined themselves, in their sermons, to the general inculcation of moral truths, with a basis of Christian sentiment. Later, the more pronounced of these, forced into controversy, seceded from the old Church, and became Unitarians, though at first of a mild pattern of heresy. Of North American Rationalism, Dr. Andrews Norton was the Erasmus, William Ellery Channing the Melancthon, and Theodore Parker the Luther, whose "words were battles." Norton's learned objections to the doctrine of the Trinity, which he ascribed to a false or inaccurate exegesis, belong to the history of Biblical criticism. CHANNING (1780-1842), a fine writer as well as a brave thinker, claims notice, in the most cursory review of American literature, by the attractive sincerity of a life devoted to the pursuit of truth, by the vigour of his conceptions, and his almost invariably graceful and correct expression of them. Born in Rhode Island, he, after a brilliant career as a Harvard student, and the usual European visit, spent his own life in charge of

his church at Boston, and breathed its stirring political and intellectual atmosphere. His earliest considerable essay, and one of the best known of his numerous controversial works, indicates by its title, *The Moral Argument against Calvinism*, his prevailing attitude. Starting with a firm belief in the dignity of human nature, a faith he enunciates in the elevated style of Fichte, and glowing with the love of God as a Supreme Benevolence, he revolts against the Puritan tenets of universal depravity and partial election, as belonging to a Juggernaut worship, which it was his mission to help to destroy. Channing implicitly relied on *a-priori* moral arguments, and employed them as his engines of attack against all persons, institutions, or practices that offended his rigid sense of justice, or aroused the indignation of his fervid philanthropy. Among these, Napoleon, war, and slavery were the perpetual targets of his wrath—as the giant wrong-doer and the giant wrongs of his generation. A keen practical sense of the duties of life is, in most of his work, more conspicuous than abstract speculative power; but his insight into the position of parties, his charitable view of them, and his forecasts of the probability of future conflicts, are remarkable. Though at variance with the majority of the creeds of Christendom, Channing's writings are everywhere marked by a reverential spirit, and not unfrequently by a touch of inherited asceticism. His essays on *Self-Culture* anticipate much said, more recently, by the later school of free-thought, to which he gave the first distinct impulse. The following passage on *Spiritual Freedom* recalls Persius and forestalls Emerson:—

"I *call that mind free* which protects itself against the usurpations of society, which does not cower to human opinion, which feels itself accountable to a higher tribunal than man's, which respects a higher law than fashion, which respects itself too much to be the slave or tool of the many or the few.

"I *call that mind free* which, through confidence in God and in the power of virtue, has cast off all fear but that of wrong-doing, which no

menace or peril can enthral, which is calm in the midst of tumults, and possesses itself though all else be lost.

"I *call that mind free* which resists the bondage of habit, which does not mechanically repeat itself and copy the past, which does not live on its old virtues, which does not enslave itself to precise rules, but which forgets what is behind, listens for new and higher monitions of conscience, and rejoices to pour itself forth in fresh and higher exertions.

I *call that mind free* which is jealous of its own freedom, which guards itself from being merged in others, which guards its empire over itself as nobler than the empire of the world."

It was this sort of discourse, dwelling on truths not often preached and duties seldom practised, raising the minds of his hearers into the clearer air of his own spotless life, that made the preacher so conspicuous and beneficent a power.

> "Cultor enim juvenum purgatas inseris aures
> Fruge Cleantheâ."

Channing never flinches in denouncing either excess or meanness, and tells his fashionable congregation "wealth ought not to secure to the prosperous the slightest consideration," but there is no sourness in his asceticism. In his address on Temperance especially—one of his favourite themes—he takes occasion to protest against the idea that there is anything in religion inconsistent with cheerfulness, healthful amusements, such as dancing, sports, etc., or social pleasures.

"To fight against our nature is not to serve the cause of piety. God, who has made us for smiles much more than for tears, who has made laughter the most contagious of all sounds, whose Son hallowed a marriage feast by His presence . . . cannot have intended us for a dull monotonous life. . . . A religion giving dark views of God, and infusing superstitious fear of innocent enjoyment, instead of aiding sober habits, will, by making men abject and sad, impair their moral force, and prepare them for intemperance as a refuge from depression or despair."

Times were changing since the days of the Church-State of New England, and the way was being prepared for the teaching of Concord. Where Jonathan Edwards had driven

men—sometimes to righteousness, sometimes out of their senses—by the terrors of a future life, Channing allured them by unconsciously representing in his own person the "Beauty of Holiness." During the same period his opinions, with some modifications, were ably upheld by Orville Dewey, by Dr. J. G. Palfrey in his *Academical Lectures*, delivered as Professor of Biblical Criticism at Cambridge, and by the accomplished German immigrant Charles Follen, during the brief Unitarian ministry which preceded his premature death in the ill-fated "Lexington." But his successor in pulpit influence and the development of heterodox theology was THEODORE PARKER, one of the most prominent men in New England, renowned for a learning which, though not always well digested, was of imposing bulk, for a sledge-hammer speech, which impressed his hearers perhaps more than his readers, and for a fearlessness which often passed into audacity. Parker's personality seems to have had a power of inspiring enthusiasm even beyond that inspired by Channing: Lowell refers to him as a prodigy of reference, and among the group of anti-slavery orators he was a commanding figure. Expelled even from the Unitarian fold, his "opinions

'Being so ultra-Socinian they shocked the Socinians,'"

he made a flock of his own, and led it, in gathering crowds, where he listed, by force of character rather than culture. But Parker's writings will not stand criticism so well as Channing's. If he is sometimes more impassioned, he is often florid, diffuse, and even noisy in his trumpets of revolt. He does not, like Emerson, take up a calm vantage ground of philosophical survey or scorn: "he roars beneath the walls of the Jericho of orthodoxy, and expects them to fall." In this age, it is absurd to claim for any position in theology, or even perhaps in morals, an immunity from discussion. The only imperative rule is that it be conducted in good taste. This

rule Theodore Parker has often violated; and in his pages there are frequent expressions which "do knock at the door of blasphemy without intent to enter therein,"—expressions which would be repudiated by any Oxonian atheist, without a tithe of Parker's all-pervading sentiment of religion. The result is that, in his somewhat cometic career, he has sometimes hit the white, and often flung a boomerang. But his works abound in strong argument and in fine descriptions of historic events and scenes, from which we may take the following, in preference to a specimen of his Boanerges style:—

"By means of his marshals he one day caught a Scotch girl, a covenanter. She was young, only eighteen. She was comely to look upon. Her name was Margaret. Graham ordered her to be tied to a stake in the sea at low water, and left to drown slowly at the advance of the tide. It was done; and his creatures—there were enough of them in Scotland, as of their descendants here" (he is thinking of the reclaimers of fugitive slaves), "his commissioners, his marshals, and his attorneys—sat down on the shore to watch the end of poor Margaret. It was an end not to be forgotten. In a clear sweet voice she sang hymns to God, till the waves of the sea broke over her head, and floated her pious soul to her God and His heaven. Had Scotland been a Catholic country there would have been another Saint Margaret, known as the

> 'Genius of the shore,
> In her large recompence who would be good
> To all that wander in that perilous flood.'"

Some one has said that if Channing had lived in a Catholic country he would have been canonised. The frequent "approchments" between the recent sceptical and the oldest form of the Christian faith are remarkable. Margaret's Covenanters, had they had power, would have burnt the holders of either.

Theodore Parker's career was throughout involved in the new crisis in his country's history, with a brief reference to which we must close this half-political survey. I refer of course to the great death-struggle of the Slave-Power and the events that frustrated Webster's hope for a peaceful solution

of the besetting problem. It is theoretically true that reform is better than revolution, and that when bad institutions have become long engrained in a community, they cannot without disasters be uprooted with sudden violence. It may, for example, be desirable that every subject of a State should have the full privileges of a citizen; but no wise legislator can afford to disregard the disqualifying effect of centuries of ignorance. It is possible that, in the interest of the oppressed class itself, slavery might have come to a happier end through a process of gradual emancipation. But when the dominant classes,—as the Church authorities of the fifteenth, the French noblesse of the eighteenth, century,—deaf to the call for concession, can be brought to think of nothing but the retention of their privileges, revolution becomes the "ultima ratio" of reform. This precisely occurred in the case of the Southern leaders, who, inspired with the ideas of Calhoun, without his comparative clearness of sight, if not purity of purpose, on his death, broke their previous traces, and rushed into every insolent extreme. Alarmed by the rapid progress of the Free States in the healthier regions of the North-West, and finding their own soils exhausted by necessarily unintelligent labour, hungering after new pastures, they unfurled their banner, no longer for State Rights, but to make slavery a recognised and protected Federal institution, free to spread over the Union. They braved out their misdeeds, and boasted of their calamity, till it became a crime. Their test of every candidate for the Presidency was his willingness to support an institution which from their benches and churches was now declared divine. Some of their responsible statesmen were even found to advocate a revival of the Slave Trade. Meanwhile Massachusetts, and the aroused moral feeling of New England generally, replied by an antithetic fanaticism. There has been a grain of this spirit in all the great religious and social reforms of history, and when Web-

ster spoke of "persons disposed to mount upon some particular duty, as upon a war-horse, and to drive furiously on and upon and over all other duties that may stand in the way," and of those "who deal with morals as with mathematics," he was designedly, nor altogether inaccurately, describing the Northern Abolitionists, who, regarding slavery from the first not as a misfortune, but as a sin against God and man, refused in all that concerned it to make any distinction between compromise of action and compromise of principle. Inspired with almost a mania for an ideal morality, they would have scouted the dictum of Burke, approved by Mr. Gladstone, "In politics the sphere accorded to abstract reasoning is extremely limited." As Knox declared "The idolater should die the death," so they made their motto "No union with slaveholders" extend from public to private life. But, in both cases, a purely disinterested, was evoked by antagonism to a merely selfish, intolerance; and in both, the reformers were men living in memory of atrocities committed on their friends; speaking and acting with their own lives in their hands. Their vehemence was that of words, the counter fury of deeds. The period in America between 1835 and 1860, has, with little exaggeration, been called its martyr age; for its annals are thick-strewn with victims to the lawless gibbets, revolvers, bowie-knives, and clubs, of which the once hospitable and chivalrous South was then willing to avail herself. With all their errors of judgment, some not inconsiderable, the Abolitionists were the noblest body of men of their nation and time. Their pioneer and chief was the self-taught printer, who, in 1830, set the first sheet of *The Liberator*.

> "In a small chamber, friendless and unseen,
> Toiled o'er his types one poor unlearned young man;
> The place was dark, unfurnitured, and mean,
> Yet there the freedom of a race began;"

a freedom not to be achieved in the way he foresaw, by the

mere might of moral power, but directly due to his influence. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON from first to last disclaimed the idea of being a politician. In one of those short grand sayings which stood him in stead of any elaborate eloquence, he declared—"I am determined to know nothing as a public man save Jesus Christ and Him crucified, and in this country I see Him crucified again in the person of the slave." But he did more to "convert" his age than all its politicians together. His career is the most salient instance in biography of what can be done by perfect courage, unrelenting determination, and absolute singleness of aim. His early manifestoes were received, in lieu of argument, by frantic threats of murder from the Southern press, then, it would appear, mostly edited by ruffians. To these he paid no attention, save occasionally reprinting them in the *Liberator*. Nearer home he ran greater danger. In 1835, the feeling was so strong against him that he was, by a mob of well-dressed and well-to-do gentlemen, dragged through the streets of Boston with a halter round his neck, and was only saved by being thrown into jail. The moment he was out, he went on printing, with the declaration, "I will not recede an inch, and I shall be heard." Such a voice could not be stifled. He was heard. During fifteen years his papers and pamphlets were spread or smuggled all over the land; he had gathered to his circle most of the choicest spirits of New England—Channing, Lowell, Whittier, Emerson, Follen, Parker, Sumner, Chase, etc.; he had won the waverers, held up the arms of the faint, rebuked and shamed or silenced the arrogant, and led the tide of Northern revolt, till searchers for fugitives in Boston had to be guarded by the military, and Massachusetts in her turn threatening to secede, the law of 1850 became a dead letter. A decade passed, and the old man—whose non-resistance principles had been sorely tried in the liberating war, in which his son served as an officer—marched up the streets of

Charleston, where thirty years before a price had been set upon his head, among a throng of freedmen, "rending the air with their shouts" to see "the flag" re-hoisted on Fort Sumter. In 1879 he departed in peace, and entered into his inheritance. "No shadow of suspicion," writes Whittier, "rests upon the white statue of a life, the fitting garland of which should be the Alpine flower that symbolises noble purity."

As Garrison was the apostle of Abolitionism, so its orator was WENDELL PHILLIPS, a man of the highest birth and culture of New England, who with equal devotion surrendered his brilliant prospects at the bar and Senate to the advocacy of the cause to which from youth upwards he gave his splendid energies and eloquence. Of the latter we can only give a single instance—earliest in date, but characteristic of his manner and attitude throughout. In 1837, at a crowded meeting, convened by Dr. Channing in Faneuil Hall, to express indignation at the murder of Lovejoy, Mr. Austin, the Attorney-General of the State, moved an amendment, in the course of which he justified the atrocity, and compared the mob of miscreants who had perpetrated it to that which had destroyed the tea in Boston harbour. Whereupon Phillips rose and said—

"Mr. Chairman—When I heard the gentleman lay down principles which placed the rioters, incendiaries, and murderers of Alton side by side with Otis and Hancock, with Quincy and Adams, I thought those pictured lips (pointing to the portraits in the hall) would have broken into voice to rebuke the recreant American, the slanderer of the dead. Sir, the gentleman said that he should sink into insignificance if he dared not gainsay the principles of the resolution before this meeting. Sir, for the sentiments he has uttered on soil consecrated by the prayers of Puritans and the blood of patriots, the earth should have yawned and swallowed him up."

Phillips has always been the leader of the extreme "gauche" of the party, and his fervour frequently led him beyond the limits prescribed by the substantial good sense of Garrison;

but in distinct genius for speech he was their Coryphæus. Their politician, and nearly one of their martyrs, CHARLES SUMNER, had the same claims of scholarship and descent, with a native power little inferior. His earlier eloquence is best illustrated by some of his denunciations of war (*v.* especially his description of a sea-fight). Most of his life was spent in battle, its closing years in triumph, when, in high office, most honourably attained, he helped to weld together the Union under new conditions. This extensive learning and retentive memory enabled him to make a mass of facts converge on the conclusion of an argument, at once impassioned and apparently judicial. No better testimony can be given to the trenchant force of his eloquence than the dastardly assault made upon him (1856) in the Senate by Preston Brooks. The approval of this outrage in the South, with the contemporary events of the free fight for Kansas, made it plain that while constitutional disputes may be adjusted by civilised discussion, the only answer to organised rowdyism is at the cannon's mouth. We shall recur to the last phase of the struggle, in connection with the poetry it called forth. Pierce paved the way for the treachery of Buchanan, and that for the open revolt of the Mississippi repudiator. The North, with its twenty[1] States and twenty millions, taken at a disadvantage, had to fight against the eleven States of the South, with six million[2] freemen, three-and-a-half million slaves, for three years before the Union was virtually saved at Gettysburg.[3] The crisis passed, the question of the end was merely one of time, and the event gave rise to the few paragraphs of consummate natural

[1] Kentucky and Maryland being set down as neutral, and Missouri as loyal.

[2] These are roughly the numbers, allowing for the average increase on the census of 1860.

[3] Gettysburg was the Metaurus of the war; though hope of foreign aid, and Lee's generalship, for two years more prolonged the desperate fight.

eloquence, in which the rail-splitter of Illinois, raised on the surge of a great moral and patriotic tide, recalled the address of Pericles over his Athenian dead, in terms with which we may close our record of the oratory of the West:—"It is for us, the living, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us; that from these honoured dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people—by the people and for the people—shall not perish from the earth."

CHAPTER V.

HISTORIANS—ROMANCE AND CRITICISM, 1800-1850.

If the literary fame of the orator and statesman is transient, he has the compensation of having more or less permanently affected the destinies of the nation in which his personality is merged. He makes history: he is, equally with the soldier or philanthropist, a cause of the struggles, victories, and defeats of which others have to preserve the memory. Mere narrative is often almost contemporaneous with the event, and biographies are apt to follow too swiftly on the lives of great men. But these are mere preliminaries to a true History, which, as the result of the comprehensive reflection of an organising genius, makes as great a claim on the finest faculties and strongest energies of the mind as an epic poem does. It demands a knowledge of details rarely combined with the power to grasp a whole: it involves a perfect idea of the proportion of parts, keen analysis of character, broad synthesis of national movements on or beneath the surface, the impartial verdicts of a judge and the skill of an artist, the zeal of the moralist tempered by the sense of the politician, the sympathies of the antiquary with the past, almost the insight of the prophet into the future. Such histories are necessarily few. Greece, Rome, and England have each contributed but one that meets all the conditions—the works respectively of Thucydides, Tacitus, and Gibbon.

They never come early in the literature of any country. Our Saxon, semi-Saxon, and Norman chronicles differ from the Fasti Consulares, or even the notched sticks of savage tribes, by the occasional infusion into their pages of a religious, patriotic, and pictorial element. They differ in accuracy or attractiveness: they agree in their lack of system, being for the most part bundles of facts or fictions thrown down for later ages to disentangle. Our sixteenth and seventeenth centuries abound in annals, memoirs, satirical and polemical contributions to history; but the power of massing together a long series of events in a harmonious whole, of enlisting the interest of the reader in their evolution and rendering their representation attractive by literary graces, can hardly be said to have been manifested before the eighteenth. Similarly in America, the Colonial time, and the first three decades of the Republic, abound in letters, journals, chronicles, biographies—some of great merit in themselves, others notable from association with distinguished names. Among those of the later period may be signalised J. Sanderson's *Lives of the Signers*, the historical *Discourses and Addresses* of G. C. Verplanck, Wirt's *Patrick Henry*, Parton's *Franklin and Jefferson*, the *American Register* of Brockden Brown, F. Cooper's *History of the American Navy*, *The Life of Josiah Quincy* by his son, *The Life of John Adams* by his grandson, Hamilton's *Republic of the United States*, Palfrey's *New England*, and the stupendous series edited and largely written by Jared Sparks. To these we should add Josiah Quincy's *History of Harvard University*, setting forth, in the following sentences (prefixed by the brothers Duyckinck to their indispensable Cyclopædia) what is one purpose of all, and the special claim of Transatlantic, biography:—

"While passing down the series of succeeding years, as through the interior of some ancient temple, which displays on either hand the statues of distinguished friends and benefactors, we should stay for a moment in the presence of each, doing justice to the humble, illustrat-

ing the obscure, placing in a true light the modest, and noting rapidly the moral and intellectual traits which time has spared; to the end that ingratitude, that proverbial sin of republics, may not attach to the republic of letters; and that whoever feeds the lamp of science, however obscurely, however scantily, may know that sooner or later his name and virtues shall be made conspicuous by its light."

But the first systematic *History of the United States* is that of GEORGE BANCROFT, a leading democratic politician, formerly Collector of Customs at Boston and Secretary to the Navy, who held the post of representative of his country in Great Britain from 1846-49, *i.e.* under the administration of Polk, the truculent spirit of which he seems to have largely imbibed. His work, great in extent and plan, three volumes of which are devoted to the Colonisation and seven to the Revolutionary period, published at intervals between 1834 and 1874, is still incomplete, only bringing down the record to the year 1782; but it is, as far as I am aware, still accepted as the standard authority for the events and sentiments of the two preparatory centuries of its review. The book is written for the most part in a vigorous style, somewhat defective, however, in elegance, and characterised by a certain monotony and want of ease which detracts from the pleasure of the reader. Among the more effective passages are the descriptions of Virginia and Connecticut, of the sombre forests of New Netherlands, and the crowded marts and well-stored libraries of New York, of the discovery of the Mississippi by the French explorer Marquette, and the prosperous refuge in Carolina of the exiled Huguenots. His contrast between the virtues of Chivalry and Puritanism is typical of the view generally taken by his compeers of the Northern West :—

"The Knights were brave from gallantry of spirit; the Puritans from the fear of God. The Knights were proud of loyalty; the Puritans of liberty. . . . Chivalry delighted in show, favoured pleasure, multiplied amusements, and degraded the human race by an exclusive respect for the privileged classes; Puritanism bridled the

passions . . . and rescued the name of man from dishonour. The former valued courtesy, the latter justice. The former adorned society by graceful refinements, the latter founded national grandeur on universal education. The institutions of chivalry were subverted by the gradually increasing weight and knowledge and opulence of the industrious classes; the Puritans, relying upon those classes, planted in their hearts the undying principles of democratic liberty."

Bancroft's statements of matters of fact are generally reliable: he had ample opportunity during forty years for collecting material, large experience of European as well as American sentiments, and indefatigable industry, stimulated by a patriotic enthusiasm which, in his Congressional speeches, almost amounts to ferocity; but his comments are moulded, to a degree unusual even among politicians, by fixed ideas and the foregone conclusions of a vehement partisan. From the "Republican" side there appeared in six volumes, issued in rapid succession (1849-53), a rival history, starting from the same point and coming down to 1841, by Richard Hildreth, a Boston lawyer and newspaper editor, who made himself prominent by his strenuous opposition to the annexation of Texas, and frequent denunciations of what he conceived to be the despotism of the Southern States. After publishing a work on the *Theory of Morals*, followed by another on Politics, designed to form parts of a system of Sociology, almost as comprehensive as Herbert Spencer's, he set himself to his history, in which he professed to exhibit men as they were and events as they took place, "unbedaubed with patriotic rouge." Consistently with this programme, the writer's judgments on political charlatans and successful demagogues are conspicuously severe, a fact which has provoked the remark that he "often wears the cap of the executioner, and that no statute of limitations nor canonisation of the offender avails against his impartial criticism." Hildreth's work is marked by the same Puritanic tone as Bancroft's, but it is more consistent in its crusade against popular corrup-

tions. His style is at times more animated, but he is more prone to indulge in rhetorical exaggerations. The keynote of much of the sentiment of the book is found in the keen abolitionist views, previously expressed in the author's fairly successful romance, *The White Slave*. One of the merits of his history is its appreciation of the Federalists and their leader, of whom he writes—

"Hamilton possessed the same rare and lofty qualities, the same just balance of soul, with less indeed of Washington's severe simplicity . . . but with more of warmth, variety, ornament, and grace. If the Doric in architecture be taken as the symbol of Washington's character, Hamilton's belonged to the same grand style as developed in the Corinthian—if less impressive, more winning. If we add Jay for the Ionic, we have a trio not to be matched in our history. Of earth-born Titans, as terrible as great, now angels and now toads and serpents, there are everywhere enough. Of the serene and benign sons of the celestial gods, how few at any time have walked the earth."

Nearly one half of the works of the most classic American prose writers, of the generations previous to our own, are Historical or Biographical. Washington Irving's *Conquest of Granada*, his *Lives* of *Mahomet and his Successors*, of *Columbus*, of *Goldsmith*, and of *Washington*, although not the most original, are among the most interesting of his works—accurate in their leading estimates, and marked by the usual smoothness and even flow of his style. Irving contemplated a continuation of the record of the early relations of Spain to the New World, but, with his wonted generosity, abandoned the theme on hearing that the task had been assumed by worthy hands.

The works of WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT, the most artistic historian to whom the United States have hitherto given birth, are remarkable from the difficulties under which they were produced, and for the well-deserved success which they have achieved. This success is due in part to the genius and indomitable industry of the writer, in part to the steady concentration of his powers on the arduous undertaking of which

he had, at an early age, formed a just estimate. In a diary of 1819 (that is in his twenty-fifth year), he allows ten years for preliminary studies, and ten more for the execution of his task, a notable example to his countrymen, nine-tenths of whose literary performances will prove ephemeral, less from lack of ability in the writers than from an utterly inadequate sense of the time and toil that the Muses demand of their votaries. *Ferdinand and Isabella*, given to the world in 1838, was written while Mr. Prescott was, owing to an accident at college, almost wholly deprived of his sight. His authorities in a foreign tongue were read to him by an assistant, and by aid of a writing-case for the blind he scrawled the pages of his great work. It soon attained a European as well as an American fame, and superseded all other records of the period of which it treats. No such comprehensive view of Spain at the zenith of her greatness has ever appeared in English. The proportion of its parts and the justice of its estimates are universally acknowledged, while hypercriticism of the style—graceful, correct, and sufficiently varied—can only point to the occasional possibility of greater condensation. Among the most notable of the descriptions, which can seldom be detached from the whole into which they are woven, we may refer to the return of Columbus, and the contrasted characters of Queens Isabella and Elizabeth. The *Conquest of Mexico* (written with somewhat improved sight) followed in 1843, that of Peru in 1847. These have attained an even wider popularity than their precursor, owing to the more condensed romance and greater novelty of their themes: they are "open sesames" to an old world of wonders—real, and yet, from its strangeness, invested with half the charms of Fairyland. Few passages of fiction are so enthralling to the youthful reader as the first sight of the Spanish adventurers of the plain and city of the Aztecs—the story of Nezahualcoyotl King of Tezcuco; the whole life,

exploits, and tragic end of Montezuma; the night retreat from the Aztec capital; the account of the sun-worshippers in the golden city. The following reflections on the fall of one of the great Mexican races convey in short space an idea of Prescott's style :—

"What thoughts must crowd on the mind of the traveller as he wanders amidst these memorials of the past; as he treads over the ashes of the generations who reared these colossal fabrics, which take us from the present into the very depths of time! But who were their builders? Was it the shadowy Olmecs, whose history, like that of the ancient Titans, is lost in the mists of fable? or, as commonly reported, the peaceful and industrious Toltecs, of whom all that we can gleam rests on traditions hardly more secure? What has become of the races who built them? Did they remain on the soil, and mingle and become incorporated with the fierce Aztecs who succeeded them? Or did they pass on to the South, and find a wider field for the expansion of their civilisation, as shown by the higher character of the architectural remains in the distant regions of Central America and Yucatan? It is all a mystery, over which Time has thrown an impenetrable veil, that no mortal hand may raise. A nation has passed away,—powerful, populous, and well advanced in refinement, as attested by their monuments,—but it has perished without a name. It has died and made no sign!"[1]

Equally striking, in the *Conquest of Peru*, are the descriptions of the great annual ceremonies in the Temple of the Sun :—

"For three days previous there was a general fast, and no fire was allowed to be lighted in the dwellings. When the appointed day arrived, the Inca and his court, followed by the whole population of the city, assembled at early dawn in the great square to greet the rising of the Sun. They were dressed in their gayest apparel, and the Indian lords vied with each other in the display of costly ornaments and jewels on their persons, while canopies of gaudy feather-work and richly-tinted stuffs, borne by the attendants over their heads, gave to the great square, and the streets that emptied into it, the appearance of being spread over with one vast and magnificent awning. Eagerly they watched the coming of their deity, and no sooner did his first yellow rays strike the turrets and loftiest buildings of the capital, than a shout of gratulation broke forth from the assembled multitude, accompanied by songs of triumph, and the wild melody of barbaric

[1] *Conquest of Mexico*, Book V. chap. iv.

instruments, that swelled louder and louder as his bright orb, rising above the mountain range towards the east, shone in full splendour on his votaries."

And of the perils that beset the inland march of the Spaniards—

"On the departure of his vessels Pizarro marched into the interior, in the hope of finding the pleasant champaign country which had been promised him by the natives. But at every step the forests seemed to grow denser and darker, and the trees towered to a height such as he had never seen, even in these fruitful regions where Nature works on so gigantic a scale. Hill continued to rise above hill as he advanced, rolling onward, as it were, by successive waves to join that colossal barrier of the Andes, whose frosty sides, far away above the clouds, spread out like a curtain of burnished silver, that seemed to connect the heavens with the earth."[1]

Both these later works are dramas, in which our sympathy is divided between the chivalry of Spain in her prime and the poetical traditions and patriotism of a vanished race. But their author has never, in the midst of his "Claude-like descriptions" and charmingly-vivid narratives, allowed himself to forget that he is writing history. Boys read his *Mexico* and *Peru* as they read the *Arabian Nights;* critics can point to few flaws in the accuracy of his judgment. *Philip II.*, Mr. Prescott's latest and unfinished work—with less brilliancy of colouring, as becomes the more sombre theme—is rendered even more weighty by the solidity of its judgments. For an example of his disenchanting view of the fables of history, we may refer to his refutation of the romantic story—made famous by Schiller—of Don Carlos and Queen Isabella. Perhaps the most impressive single passage in the book is the account, near the beginning, of the resignation of Charles V.: but in this, as in other pages of his later work, the ground has been traversed by his successor.

JOHN LOTHROP MOTLEY, a distinguished ambassador in

[1] *Conquest of Peru*, Book II. chap. iii.

foreign courts, and author of the best existing history of Holland, is in his province Mr. Prescott's only rival. Less faultless, he is more strikingly original, and writes with a warmer glow. The greater complexity of the subject, which he has made his own, calls for the exercise of even higher powers. The *Dutch Republic*, which appeared in 1856, at once arrested attention by its evidence of long research, comprehensive grasp, and the enthusiasm which, only here and there interfering with the impartiality of the author, gives life to the work. Mr. Motley's style, even to minute turns in his sentences, bears the impress of the influence of Carlyle. The very titles of his chapters, especially in the first volume, seem transferred from the *French Revolution:* such are "Sowing the Wind," "The Harvest Ripening," "The First Whirlwind," "The Taciturn against King, Cardinal, and Elector," etc. From the same source he may have caught some of his hero-worship, which, however, by the choice of a worthy idol, he has done much to vindicate. The *Dutch Republic*, preluded by the overture of a masterly and vivid historical survey, is a drama, which facts have made highly sensational, of the fiercest struggle against temporal and spiritual despotism that, within the same space of years, Europe has seen. It is divided, not inappropriately, though perhaps with some regard for effect, into a prologue and five acts, to each of which, in succession, the name of the Spanish governor for the time is attached. The portraits of the great emissaries—particularly those of Granvelle of Arras and Duchess Margaret of Alva, Don John of Lepanto, and Alexander of Parma—are drawn with bold strokes and in lasting colours. Behind the scenes, director of the assailing forces, is the evil genius, Philip himself, to whose ghastly figure, writing letters in the Escurial, our attention is called with a wearisome if not affected iteration of phrase, while the presence of the great Elector, William the Silent, is felt at

every crisis retrieving the retreat and urging on the victory. The most horrible chapter of modern times, that of the Inquisition, is set forth with a power that brands its records into the memory of the reader: amid a throng of scenes of pageantry and pathos, we may refer to those of Egmont's triumph at St. Quentin, of his execution, of the misery of Mook Heath, the siege of Leyden, and the Hero's end. The *United Netherlands* (1867-69) is a continuation of the same history, in the same spirit; but, as regards style, a calmer and more matured composition. The most thrilling chapters in those four later volumes are the "Siege of Antwerp," which rivals Lord Macaulay's "Siege of Londonderry," and almost challenges comparison with that of Syracuse in Thucydides, and the account of the wreck of the Armada, unsurpassed in vividness and vigour by either Froude or Kingsley; to which we should add the episodes of the battle of Ivry, and the skirmish at Zutphen, with one of the most eloquent tributes ever paid to the genius and character of Sir Philip Sidney:—

"It is impossible not to contemplate with affection so radiant a figure, shining through the cold mists of that Zeeland winter, and that distant and disastrous epoch. There is hardly a character in history upon which the imagination can dwell with more unalloyed delight. Not in romantic fiction was there ever created a more attractive incarnation of martial valour, poetic genius, and purity of heart. If the mocking spirit of the soldier of Lepanto could 'smile chivalry away,' the name alone of his English contemporary is potent enough to conjure it back again, so long as humanity is alive to the nobler impulses."

Later, on Sidney's death after Zutphen, Mr. Motley writes:—

"Sidney was first to recognise the symptoms of mortification which made a fatal result inevitable. His demeanour during his sickness and upon his deathbed was as beautiful as his life. He discoursed with his friends concerning the immortality of the soul, comparing the doctrines of Plato and of other ancient philosophers, whose writings were so familiar to him, with the revelations of Scripture and with the dictates of natural religion. He made his will with

minute and elaborate provisions, leaving bequests, remembrances, and rings to all his friends. Then he indulged himself with music, and listened particularly to a strange song which he had himself composed during his illness, and which he had entitled 'La Cuisse Rompue.' He took leave of the friends around him with perfect calmness, saying to his brother Robert, 'Love my memory; cherish my friends; above all, govern your will and affections by the will and word of your Creator, in me beholding the end of this world with all her vanities.' And thus this gentle and heroic spirit took its flight."

Conspicuous among the full-length portraits which, with the campaigns of Parma, Spinola, and Maurice, and the intrigues of England and France, divide the interest of the book, are—that of Queen Elizabeth (whose habitual treachery, obstinate parsimony, and mere pretence to greatness, are convincingly exposed); that of Mary Stuart, the "daughter of debate;" those of Henry of Navarre, Sainte Aldegonde, and the Earl of Leicester. In 1874 there followed *The Life and Death of John of Barneveld*, "the natural sequel to the other histories already published by the author, as well as the necessary introduction to that concluding portion of his labours which" he desired "to lay before the public—a history of the Thirty Years' War." Our regret at the frustration by the writer's death of this design is heightened by the manner in which he has accomplished the introduction to what might have been his "magnum opus." The life of Barneveld is admirable as the monograph of a great man, and as the most masterly record of one of the first great struggles against the new Protestant, which succeeded the old Catholic intolerance. It is also the clearest exposition of the political and social intrigues of an eventful age—the age of the end of the Tudor dynasty in England; of the decapitation of France by the dagger of Ravaillac, an act which condemned Religion in "that country of pantomimic changes" to remain for a century and a half "the strumpet of Political Ambition;" the age of the sailing west of the "almost nameless band of emigrants," "the founders of what was to be the mightiest republic of

modern history—mighty and stable because it was founded upon an idea." The style of the work—save for some sensational paragraphs about Henry's assassination, and about James I., who turned the throne of England into a pedant's chair—is more self-contained than that of its precursors, without losing any real power. In this great picture of the "mortal combat between aristocracy disguised in the plebeian form of trading and political corporations, and democracy sheltering itself under a famous sword and an ancient and illustrious name"; "the struggle for power between the political and sacerdotal orders; the controversy whether the State shall govern the priests or the priests control the State;" the hatreds of Arminian and Gomerian;—the author is alive to the merits of the leaders of both parties. He is just to the Prince of Nassau, who said, "I know nothing of Predestination, whether it is green or whether it is blue; but I do know that the Advocate's pipe and mine will never play the same tune." But through all the stages of his noble life to his lamentable end, our sympathies are with Barneveld, and the historian convinces us that he has been the first to do "justice to a statesman and sage who wielded a vast influence at a most critical period in the fate of Christendom, and uniformly wielded it to promote the cause of temperate human liberty, both political and religious." The book is alike remarkable for grasp and sound judgment of past events, wise conclusions, in which a recoil against the excesses of democracy is more and more apparent, graphic portraiture, and occasionally incisive epigram. Since the death of Lord Macaulay no contribution, in our tongue, to historic literature, has been at once so original, solid, and popularly attractive as the nine volumes of Mr. Motley; nor has any event been more justly lamented than the premature close of the career of one, at once a student and an artist, whose often fiery zeal was always restrained by a resolute fairness, and who carried into the

politics of his own day the quenchless love of liberty with which he animates the scenes and revivifies the actors of the past.

The fine commemorative sonnet of Bryant in no way exaggerates the general feeling of our loss on both sides of the Atlantic :—

> "Sleep, Motley, with the great of ancient days,
> Who wrote for all the years that yet shall be.
> Sleep with Herodotus, whose name and praise
> Have reached the isles of earth's remotest sea.
> Sleep, while, defiant of the slow decays
> Of Time, thy glorious writings speak for thee,
> And in the answering heart of millions raise
> The generous zeal for Right and Liberty.
> And should the days o'ertake us, when, at last,
> The silence that—ere yet a human pen
> Had traced the slenderest record of the past—
> Hushed the primæval languages of men—
> Upon our English tongue its spell shall cast,
> Thy memory shall perish only then."

Mr. Whipple—who, in the best of his criticisms known to me, has well emphasised the distinction between Prescott's survey of events, as "on a watch-tower," and Motley's passionate mingling in the fight—says correctly that the *History of Charles the Bold*, by Mr. John F. Kirk, may be regarded as an introduction to the works of both his masters. It may have been so designed, and as such is valuable, being reliable as to facts vividly narrated; but the style is inferior, from a still closer following, in many instances, of the eccentricities, without the redeeming splendours or the terse suggestiveness, of Carlyle. As supplementary, in some measure, to all these volumes, especially to those of Prescott, we may here mention the *History of Spanish Literature*, by his friend and coadjutor George Ticknor, incomparably the best, the most comprehensive, most critical, and most interesting work which, in our language at least, exists on the subject.[1]

[1] The time has hardly come to estimate recent contributions to the history of the American civil war, as the antagonistic apologies for Davis and pane-

The lighter, or so called polite, literature of the first half of this century, though often so miscellaneous as to defy classification, falls mainly to be considered under the three heads of Fiction, Books of Travel, and more or less critical Essays. We have seen that to the scant leisure of some of the leaders of the Revolution we owe some of the earliest and best descriptions of American scenery, as well as imaginative representations of events and character. Among the prominent lawyers, or professional men, of the age immediately succeeding, who have made similar contributions, we can here only refer to—Judge Story, who, by virtue of his discourse on classical studies and pictures from nature—especially his Indian summer—takes high rank as a scholar and prose artist; Judge Hugh H. Brackenridge, a democrat, inspired with a praiseworthy zeal against the system of slavery and electoral corruption, whose *Modern Chivalry*, a sort of burlesque of *Don Quixote* and reflection of *Hudibras*, is a notable satire on the vices or temptations of politicians generally and those of his own party in particular; J. P. Kennedy of Baltimore, a successful barrister and Congressman, also a vigorous essayist and author of some lively sketches of country life and manners in the old Dominion; Richard H. Wilde of Georgia (in which State, after surmounting unusual difficulties, he rose to eminence at the bar), author of the song entitled the *Lament of the Captive*, and of a *Life of Tasso*, written after two years' residence in Europe, displaying extensive research and occasionally subtle criticism; lastly, H. Swinton Legaré of Charleston, at one time a student of law in Edinburgh, a prominent speaker in the House of Representatives, after-

gyrics of Lincoln. Among the most prominent narratives should be mentioned those of Greeley, of Henry Wilson, and General Sherman's somewhat vapouring account of his own campaign; nor should we omit the numerous able and vigorous papers of Major-General J. Watts de Peyster, who is also a leading authority on matters of military criticism connected with the old war of Independence, and an original investigator of some periods of Scotch history.

wards President Tyler's Attorney-General, who published in the *Southern Quarterly* and *New York Reviews* a series of excellent reviews of Greek and Roman literature.

The first American who devoted himself to letters as a profession was also the first novelist of note whom the United States have produced. CHARLES BROCKDEN BROWN was born in Philadelphia in 1771; he was remarkable at school for his precocity and love of retirement; he studied law at New York, but, in revolt from what seemed to him the iniquity of trying to make the worse appear the better cause, abandoned it for the society and exercise of an invalid fancy. He married in 1804, and died prematurely six years later in his native city. Brown came before the world (1797) in his *Alcuin*, a dialogue on the rights of women, one of the earliest of a host of pamphlets on the same theme; and a year later produced his *Wieland*, a tale of adventure, in which he set the example on his side of the Atlantic of the love of the anomalous, horrible, and fantastic, then represented on our own by Beckford's *Vathek*, Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, Godwin's *Caleb Williams* and *St. Leon:* at a later date by Mrs. Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* and Mrs. Shelley's *Frankenstein*. *Wieland* was followed by *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn*, and *Edgar Huntly*, unmistakably the productions of a man of genius. None are wanting in passages of thrilling interest, striking situations, and subtle analysis of character. But they dwell overmuch on the "night-side of nature," and are in great measure devoted to the often repulsive anatomy of mental disease. This peculiarity is doubtless partially due to the physically morbid condition of the writer; but it so frequently marks the romance of his successors, down to our own times, that it must be regarded as a national trait. It is, at first glance, the last feature we should expect to find in the literature of a young country. But we must bear in mind that "the youth of America" is in many respects a deceitful metaphor. Colonists have a fresh

field, but an old experience, of which they are often tired, and one of their great aspirations is to try all experiments which their new circumstances render it possible for them to make. Add, in the United States, the half-climatic restlessness; the complexity of a population drawn from many, often half reputable, sources; the wild life of pioneers everywhere—and it remains no matter of surprise that many of their writers want poise as well as equanimity, and that they should, with the same reckless vigour as our own pre-Shakespearian dramatists, forget or discard

> "Degree, priority and place,
> Investure, course, proportion, season, form."

Where the people are stretching out feelers, in every direction, to the past, the distant, the future, practising almost side by side the extremes of asceticism, and of unfettered animalism, it is natural that the laws which are defied across the Mississippi should be arraigned on the seaboard; that where Emerson's Orphic rhymes, Thoreau's solitary rhapsodies, and Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass* all find an audience, the originality of some of their romances should be tainted by a strange and often fantastic violence. The *littérateurs* of a nation that rejoices in fighting with savages are apt to take a morbid pleasure in fighting with problems. In the first age of American literature these problems are practical; in the next, as we shall have occasion to note, they become metaphysical. The circumstances of Brown's career and the peculiarities of his temperament contributed to the same result. Far from being a misanthrope by nature, he was a keen patriot—protesting in one of his numerous pamphlets against the presence of any foreign power on the banks of the Mississippi—a devoted husband, a sweet-tempered and affectionate friend, and, in his happier hours, a bright, though modest talker. But his life was one long disease. A year before his death he writes to his wife—"When have I known that lightness

and vivacity of mind which the divine flow of health, even in calamity, produces in some men, and would produce in me, no doubt, at least when not soured by misfortune. Never—scarcely ever—not longer than half an hour at a time since I was a man." Sadder words have been seldom spoken. His speculative views also contributed to make him a comparative solitary: in religion, a Quaker turned Deist; regarding the law, to which he had been trained, as "a tissue of shreds and remnants of a barbarous antiquity, patched by the stupidity of modern workmen into new deformity," and disposed, in the same spirit, to bring into debate every established institution of society, he became an idealist and Utopian of a colour which has been compared with that of his admirer Shelley.[1] Both drew from Godwin's *Political Justice* and the bias of their own minds similar conclusions: both followed the author of *St. Leon* in their predilection for the marvellous, if not the unnatural. The most salient audacity of his *Alcuin* is an impeachment, passing Milton's, of the marriage law. "I disapprove of it," says the interlocutor in the dialogue, with whom the writer evidently sympathises, "in the first place, because it renders the female a slave to the man; it enjoins and enforces submission on her part to the will of her husband; it includes a promise of implicit obedience and unalterable affection. Secondly, it leaves the woman destitute of property; whatever she previously possesses belongs absolutely to the man. . . . Why is marriage to condemn two human beings to dwell under the same roof and to eat at the same table. . . . Familiarity is the sure destroyer of reverence." These views do not seem to have disturbed the writer's own domestic felicity, and some of them point to legislative changes

[1] Mr. George Barnett Smith, to whom ("Fortnightly Review," September 1878) I am indebted for the comparison, curiously remarks: "Had Shelley written novels, we can well imagine that they would have been of the same type as Brown's." Shelley did write novels which,—*i.e. Zastrozzi, St. Irvyne the Rosicrucian*, and the fragment of the *Assassins*,—are emphatically of that type.

either made or advocated; but others must have contributed to his seclusion from commonplace contented society, and led him, with artistic as well as moral harm, to make his own mind a kingdom to itself. Neither a poet on the one hand, nor a close reasoner on the other, he found relief for his revolutionary impulses in depicting in graphic, sometimes hideous hues, through the media of his wild romances, the anomalous aspects of life, to which his experience of the plague in Philadelphia and New York, where his bosom friend Dr. Elihu Smith fell a victim to its ravages, gave a darker dye. A lurid cloud overhangs his strong imagination. All his romances are suggestive, all more or less morbid and bizarre. *Wieland*, his first complete creation, is a ghastly tale of doom overwhelming a superstitious family. The father dies by spontaneous combustion—an idea that anticipates that of *Bleak House;* the son, in obedience to the dictates of a mysterious voice, ultimately proved to emanate from the villain Carwin (who desires to seduce his sister), murders, with every circumstance of horror, his wife and children. The recital of the incident and its motive, in the defence of the criminal on trial, is perhaps the most powerful in the author's writings: the passage has been well characterised as "the acme of misery and terror," but it is too long for quotation. In *Arthur Mervyn* we have the same conflict of unsuspicious innocence with triumphant scoundrelism, represented by the swindler and assassin Welbeck: in the course of the tale we have a thrilling account of the yellow fever in Philadelphia, which may be compared with the corresponding narratives in Thucydides, Lucretius, Boccaccio, and Defoe. The following is one of its masterpieces of delineation :—

"I approached a house, the door of which was opened, and before which stood a vehicle, which I presently recognised to be a *hearse*. The driver was seated on it. I stood still to mark his visage, and to observe the course which he proposed to take. Presently a coffin, borne by two men, issued. The driver was a negro, but his companions were

white. Their features were marked by indifference to danger or pity. One of them, as he assisted in thrusting the coffin into the cavity provided for it, said, 'I'll be damned if I think the poor dog was quite dead. It wasn't the *fever* that ailed him, but the sight of the girl and her mother on the floor. I wonder how they all got into that room. What carried them there?'

"'The other surlily muttered, 'Their legs to be sure.'

"'But what should they hug together in one room for!'

"'To save us trouble, to be sure.'

"'And I thank them with all my heart; but, damn it, it wasn't right to put him in his coffin before the breath was fairly gone. I thought the last look he gave me told me to stay a few minutes.'

"'Pshaw! he could not live. The sooner dead the better for him, as well as for us. Did you mark how he eyed us, when we carried away his wife and daughter? I never cried in my life, since I was knee-high, but, curse me, if I ever felt in better tune for the business than just then. Hey!' continued he, looking up and observing me, standing a few paces distant, and listening to their discourse, 'What's wanted? Anybody dead?'"

In *Edgar Huntly* (the novel selected for Bentley's series) the plot turns on the common legal crux of mistaken identity, again aided by an abnormal condition. The hero narrates the incidents to the sister of his friend Waldegrave, who has been, as is supposed, secretly assassinated. Wandering alone in the moonlight, he sees a man digging under a tree, and looking round, as he does so, with a woeful pallid face. In the conviction that he has found the murderer, Edgar pursues him through the mazes of a wood into a cavern, and then, from place to place, for years. Ultimately the man, who narrowly escapes the mistaken avenger, turns out to be a poor foreigner and somnambulist of the neighbourhood, who had been, in his sleep-walk, interring some records of a strange career. The story, as so briefly told, has an element of anti-climax: its merit is in the detail of the adventures which Huntly encounters, in as wild a race as that of Faust with Mephistopheles, "thoro' bush thoro' briar, thoro' flood thoro' fire," through scarce penetrable forests, and to the entrances of caves "measureless to man," across thundering torrents, over great logs, slippery by the wet and unsteadfast by the

wind, to the edge of precipices down which panthers are crashing, and along which the red-skins are stealing with their scalping knives. *Ormond* is mainly remarkable for the analytical power shown in the author's one fine female character, Constantia Dudley, who, reduced from affluence to poverty, braves all the threats and seductions of the hypocritical Lovelace, from whom the book takes its name. Brown's plots are, as a rule, methodless and improbable: his bursts of passion are dulled by intervening tediousness; and his style, generally rough, is sometimes further deformed by pedantic circumlocutions; but he leaves us, despite his acknowledged obligations to Godwin, with the impression of an original power cramped by the necessities of hasty work, unhappily because prematurely quenched, and of a writer who has been unduly forgotten.

Brown's influence is apparent in two novels of Henry Richard Dana, *Tom Thornton* and *Paul Felton*, in which a more graceful, if still somewhat abrupt, style is employed, with almost equal vigour, if inferior originality, to illustrate similar monstrosities of character, on the basis of incidents almost equally unnatural, and directed to a moral purpose with such intensity that they are said to have rather frightened than amused their readers. Dana, a barrister of the early years of the century, who lived to see his son a literary success, himself became known in the world of letters in 1814 as the author of a Fourth of July "Oration," and later as the contributor to the "North American Review" (1817-1019) of the most appreciable and subtle criticisms of the English Lake poets that had, up to that date, anywhere appeared. In 1827 he published his fantastic ghost story of *The Buccaneer* and other poems, to which he continued to add at intervals. His verses are smooth, but wanting in force. Of the same school are the prose sketches of Charles Feno Hoffman, as *Ben Blower's Story*—a thrilling account

of temporary immurement in a boiler—and the *Flying Head.* But alongside of these are others,—as *Winter in the West; Greyslaer, a Romance of the Mohawk;* and *The Vigil of Faith,* a legend of the Adirondacks—that are steeped in the freshness of the fields and hills. Hoffmann is also the author of three deservedly popular songs—*Myrtle and Steel; Sparkling and Bright;* and *Rosalie Clare.* About the same time the poet-painter, Washington Allston, interwove several of his most elaborate pictures in words in his romance of *Monaldi.* The story (of which the scene is laid in Italy), concerned with the love adventures of two students, has considerable merit; but the interest is obscured by an excess of art-criticism.

Following the order of thought rather than chronology, this is, perhaps, the proper time to introduce the name of the great American romancer, as well as poet, EDGAR ALLAN POE. One of the most morbid men of genius the modern world has seen; in the regions of the strangely terrible, remotely fantastic, and ghastly, he reigns supreme. With his lyrics we have not here to do. His best prose is no less distinctive and admirable for richness, force, clearness, and the correct choice of phrase, only definable as the literary touch. He, in this field, distances all his competitors, except Balsac, in the mental dissecting-room his only master. But, while the Frenchman deals with anomalous realities, the power of the American consists in making unrealities appear natural. Many of his works, like Hawthorne's, are either pages torn, as it were, from the second or third volumes of a complete romance, or suggestions of what might have been developed into one. This fragmentary manner has its disadvantages; but the writer of real imagination, who confines it within limited bounds, never allows the interest of his readers to flag. Edgar Poe is consequently, save in his acrid criticisms and mistaken attempts at humour, never dull. This applies, in a remarkable degree, to that section of his tales

by which, although by no means the highest, he is most widely known—I mean those devoted to the discovery of puzzles or the tracking out of crimes. These are mainly the *Gold Bug*, *The Murders in the Rue Morgue*, and *The Purloined Letter*; where the author, standing on the border-land between romance and reality, seems to prove himself the potential prince of all detectives. They are the first and best of the long series of police stories with which we have been inundated. A similar, though slightly different class, are the quaint pseudo-scientific fantasies (of which Jules Verne has of late years somewhat unscrupulously availed himself), such as *The Adventure of Hans Pfaall*, *Von Kempelen's Discovery*, *Mesmeric Revelation*, *Three Sundays in a Week*, *Words with a Mummy*, etc., where as yet ingenuity preponderates over imagination. Then come the tales of which children and nervous persons should beware, as *Thou art the Man*, *The Black Cat*, *The Pit and the Pendulum*, *The Tell-tale Heart*, *The Oblong Box*. Most if not all of these are redeemed from pure horror by their literary merits, and their reference, under grotesque circumstances, to dominant fears and passions of mankind. Among them *The Red Death* and *The Oval Portrait* inevitably suggest comparison with *Lady Eleanor's Mantle* and *The Prophetic Pictures*. The *Cask of Amontillado* bridges the way to the fourth and highest, though less generally appreciated class, where imagination preponderates over ingenuity, and where the likeness to Hawthorne is heightened. These are the subtle psychological analyses of strange conditions of the individual and of society, in which the influence of the metaphysical era becomes most apparent in our author's works; plumb-lines thrown into the deeps of existence, lurid or glittering lights swung in the unfathomed well of truth. The emotions they excite are subtler than the others, as the thrill of mystery surpasses the mere spasm of fear: they demand study, and repay it;

they require some poetic sympathy, and remain in poetic memories. The difference between the two styles is best illustrated by contrasting two modes of treating the same terror. In the *Premature Burial* Poe conceives of an ordinary man, whose mind has been stuffed with "bugaboo" stories, so afraid of being buried alive that he has planned for himself a special receptacle with a chain and bell, so arranged that he can at any moment give the alarm. This man finds, to appearance, all his cautions in vain: he is immured beyond hope: the appliances have been neglected: during absence from home he has fallen into a trance: strangers have buried him as a dog, and thrust him deep for ever into some nameless grave. He at last contrives to shriek, so that the yell of agony resounds through the "realms of the subterranean night," and is thereupon seized by a group of sailors who, in rude nautical language, ask him what he means by making such a disturbance. He has fallen asleep in a sloop, and, in a fit of nightmare, mistaken the narrow cabin for a coffin. This is grotesque, with a touch of the hideous. In the fall of the *House of Usher*, on the other hand, terror and pity are mingled in an atmosphere which is a fit setting for the finest, after *Annabel Lee*, of the author's lyrics, *In the greenest of our Valleys*, and the close is the climax of imaginative horror. The last lord of the falling house has buried his beloved sister, and placed her in a vault beneath his study. A friend comes to visit him, who, in the intervals of a terrific storm, hears low moaning sounds which keep him from sleep; but, setting these down to fancy, he composes himself to wear away the night by reading to his host a strange passage from the *Tryst of Sir Launcelot*. Again, in the pauses of the wind, the strange sounds are repeated; and as both become conscious, of what the brother had been before aware, that the sister is still alive within the tomb, the ebony panels of the chamber roll asunder. "It was the work of

the rushing gust; but then without those doors there did stand the lofty and enshrouded figure of the Lady Madeline." "For a moment she remained trembling and reeling to and fro upon the threshold; then fell heavily upon the person of her brother, and, in her now final death agonies, bore him to the floor a corpse and a victim to the terrors he anticipated." The visitor rushes out aghast, and turning back for a moment sees a wild light issuing from the house.

"The radiance was that of the full-setting and blood-red moon, which now shone vividly through a fissure extending from the roof of the building to its base. While I gazed this rapidly widened; there came a fierce breath of the whirlwind; the entire orb of the satellite burst at once upon my sight; my brain reeled as I saw the mighty walls rushing asunder; there was a long tumultuous shouting sound like the voice of a thousand waters, and the deep and silent tarn at my feet closed sullenly and silently over the fragments of the House of Usher."

In *Berenice*, again, we have a similar idea so embodied in a jumble of *diablerie* and grotesque as to cross the dangerous line. In *Eleonora* there is a pleasing contrast of gentler emotions, and "the Valley of the Many-Coloured Grass" is wrapped in the gorgeous glories of some opiate dream, as of De Quincey's *Suspiria* or of *Kubla Khan*. Poe's genius, the most intense, though, from want of breadth, by no means the greatest of his nation, has distinct affinities to that of Coleridge; but, in his manner of probing the secrets of existence, an imaginative scepticism takes the place of predetermined orthodoxy. His pure speculations, as *Eureka*, are marred by excess of idealism; but the same element adds to the impressiveness of such pieces as *William Wilson*, probably the finest allegory of Conscience that anywhere exists; *The Man of the Crowd*, with equal force symbolising the weakness of a character that has lost itself in love of sympathy; and the brilliant dreamy love-story of the *The Assignation*. To my mind, however, the most powerful of all the minor pieces of this wonderful writer is *Ligeia*, the *dénoûment* of which comes

upon us with a thrill only surpassed by some of the *tours de force* of Victor Hugo. It is introduced by a quotation from the old mystic, Joseph Glanvill, which is the refrain of the whole, and in itself memorable—

"And the will therein lieth, which dieth not. Who knoweth the mysteries of the will with its vigour? For God is but a great will pervading all things by nature of its intentness. Man doth not yield himself to the angels nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will."

The narrator, who assumes the comparatively passive *rôle* common to most of Poe's media between the public and the mystery, had met, "in some old decaying city near the Rhine," and married the lady who gives her name to the tale. Her beauty is described with the usual rhapsodies, emphasis being laid on her majesty of stature, softness of motion, raven tresses, and eyes "fuller than the fullest of the valley of Nourjahad, which expanded under passion in a miraculous manner." The qualities of Ligeia's mind are represented as no less extraordinary; but her immense attainments were surpassed by her strength of will, which, after halcyon days of love, wrestles with the grim shadow soon seen to be overshrouding her. "At high noon of the night on which she departed, beckoning me peremptorily to her side, she bade me repeat certain verses composed by herself not many days before." Then follow the well-known lines beginning—

"Lo! 'tis a gala night
Within the lonesome latter years!"

and ending—

"And the angels, all pallid and wan,
Uprising, unveiling affirm
That the play is the tragedy, 'Man,'
And its hero, the Conqueror Worm.

"'O God!' half shrieked Ligeia, leaping to her feet, and extending her arms aloft, with a spasmodic movement, as I made an end of these lines, 'Shall this conqueror be not once conquered.' 'Are we not part and parcel in Thee? Who—who knoweth the mysteries of the will,

with its vigour? Man doth not yield him to the angels nor unto death utterly, save only through the weakness of his feeble will.'"

The last low murmur from her lips, the faint echo of a voice ever low and sweet, she repeats those words, and dies with a love determining to triumph over death. The widower, in whose character there is no trait not commonplace, goes to England, eats opium; and, in an evil hour, leads "from the altar as his bride—as the successor of the unforgotten Ligeia—the fair-haired and blue-eyed Lady Rowena." This unfortunate victim of her parents' avarice soon becomes the object of her husband's hate, and in the excitement of his dreams he is constantly calling aloud on Ligeia. Meanwhile rustlings and other strange sounds begin to be heard about the tapestry of the bride-chamber; shadows from no ascertainable source are thrown on the floor, and during Rowena's illness ruby-coloured drops fall into her wine. She dies, and the twice-bereaved man watches by her inanimate frame. Then comes the close—

"It might have been midnight, or perhaps earlier, or later—for I had taken no note of time—when a sob, low, gentle, but very distinct, startled me from my reverie. I *felt* that it came from the bed of ebony—the bed of death. I listened in an agony of superstitious terror, but there was no repetition of the sound. I strained my vision to detect any motion in the corpse, but there was not the slightest perceptible. Yet I could not have been deceived. . . . At length it became evident that a slight, a very feeble, and barely noticeable tinge of colour had flushed up within the cheeks, and along the sunken small veins of the eyelids. Through a species of unutterable horror and awe, for which the language of mortality has no sufficiently energetic expression, I felt my heart cease to beat, my limbs grow rigid where I sat. Yet a sense of duty finally operated to restore my self-possession. I could no longer doubt that we had been precipitate in our preparations—that Rowena still lived. . . . In a short period it was certain, however, that a relapse had taken place; the colour disappeared from both eyelid and cheek, leaving a wanness even more than that of marble . . . all the usual rigorous stiffness immediately supervened. I fell back with a shudder upon the couch from which I had been so startlingly aroused, and again gave myself up to passionate waking visions of Ligeia. . . . The sound came again; it was a sigh. Rushing to the corpse I saw—distinctly saw—a tremor upon

the lips. In a minute afterwards they relaxed, disclosing a bright line of the pearly teeth. . . . The lady *lived;* and with redoubled ardour I betook myself to the task of restoration. . . . But in vain. Suddenly the colour fled, the pulsation ceased, the lips resumed the expression of the dead, and, in an instant afterwards, the whole body took upon itself the icy chilliness, the livid hue, the intense rigidity, the sunken outline, and all the loathsome peculiarities of that which has been for many days a tenant of the tomb.

"And again I sunk into visions of Ligeia—and again (what marvel that I shudder while I write?)—*again* there reached my ears a low sob from the region of the ebony bed. . . . I had long ceased to struggle or to move, and remained sitting rigidly upon the ottoman, a helpless prey to a whirl of violent emotions, of which extreme awe was perhaps the least terrible, the least consuming. The corpse . . . . stirred, and now more vigorously than before. The hues of life flushed up with unwonted energy into the countenance—the limbs relaxed—and, save that the eyelids were yet pressed heavily together, and that the bandages and draperies of the grave still imparted their charnel character to the figure, I might have dreamed that Rowena had indeed shaken off utterly the fetters of death. But if this idea was not, even then, altogether adopted, I could at least doubt no longer, when, arising from the bed, tottering, with feeble steps, with closed eyes, and with the manner of one bewildered in a dream, the thing that was enshrouded advanced boldly and palpably into the middle of the apartment.

"I trembled not—I stirred not—for a crowd of unutterable fancies connected with the air, the stature, the demeanour of the figure, rushing hurriedly through my brain, had paralysed—had chilled me into stone. I stirred not—but gazed upon the apparition. There was a mad disorder in my thoughts—a tumult unappeasable. Could it, indeed, be the *living* Rowena who confronted me? Could it, indeed, be Rowena *at all*—the fair-haired, the blue-eyed Lady Rowena Trevanion of Tremaine? Why, *why* should I doubt it? The bandage lay heavily about the mouth—but then might it not be the mouth of the breathing Lady of Tremaine? And the cheeks—there were the roses as in her noon of life—yes, these might indeed be the fair cheeks of the living Lady of Tremaine. And the chin, with its dimples as in health, might it not be hers?—but *had she then grown taller since her malady?* What inexpressible madness seized me with that thought! One bound, and I had reached her feet! Shrinking from my touch, she let fall from her head, unloosened, the ghastly cerements which had confined it, and there streamed forth into the rushing atmosphere of the chamber huge masses of long and dishevelled hair; *it was blacker than the raven wings of midnight!* And now slowly opened *the eyes* of the figure which stood before me. 'Here then, at least,' I shrieked aloud, 'can I never—can I never be mistaken; these are the full, and the black, and the wild eyes of my lost love—of the Lady—of the Lady Ligeia.'"

Poe's idealising and descriptive powers perhaps reach their climax in *The Domain of Arnheim;* but, on the whole, his masterpiece is his longest prose work, *Arthur Gordon Pym.* Criticism would hardly strike a line from a page of this narrative, beginning with a Crusoe-like representation of the spirit of adventure, passing to the almost unspeakable horrors of the ship of the dead, and ending in the weird mystery of the figures "of the perfect whiteness of the snow" around the engulfing cataracts of the Antarctic Pole.

We retrace our steps to the more wholesome, if less electric, works of an author whose name has been so welcome a household word in each, that it has been fought for on either side of the Atlantic. American critics often complain that when one of their countrymen writes in a fresh style we say he is untutored; when he writes in a classic style, we say he is a mere mirror of ourselves: the answer is that some of their own best critics have passed the same judgment, that few of their writers have yet learned to combine novelty with refinement, and that those who have succeeded, as Channing, and Emerson, and Hawthorne, have never been charged with either barbarism or mimicry.

The most widely and justly celebrated of Transatlantic authors, during the earlier half of this century, the amiable and versatile WASHINGTON IRVING, was undoubtedly, if we regard both his choice of subjects and mode of treating them, a cosmopolite. His numerous writings fall under two heads, as they are concerned mainly with American or with European themes. On the same principle on which Agassiz, and Follen, and Paine—even Berkeley and Priestley—have been appropriated by the United States, may Irving be associated with our literature; for, in virtue of his Scotch parentage, and in the course of four distinct and extended visits to Europe—1803-1806, 1815-1820, 1827-1832, 1841-1846, he may be said to have become half an Englishman.

His style is in the main that of the essayists of Queen Anne, modified by his peculiar and vigorous vein of humour; and many of his most effective sketches of life, manners, and society relate to the Eastern Hemisphere. Such are his Histories, the *Tales of a Traveller*, *Bracebridge Hall*, *Newstead* and *Abbotsford*, the *Alhambra*, and half of the *Sketch Book*. In others, however, and these the earliest and the latest of his works, he treats of national character, legend, and scenery in a manner of his own.

Irving was born in New York in April 3, 1783. In his twentieth year he was sent for his health to the Mediterranean: on his return, in 1806, he entered into literary partnership with James Kirke Paulding, to produce the series of papers entitled *Salmagundi*, consisting of gently quizzical representations of the society around them. Shortly afterwards, the somewhat pompous announcement of a forthcoming *History of New York*, by one of the members of an antiquarian society, led to its being forestalled by another of the same title, by *Diedrich Knickerbocker*. This work, in point of pure originality, Irving's masterpiece, is one of the richest farragos of fact, fancy, and irony that has ever issued from the press. Assuming to be written by a genuine descendant of one of the first settlers of New Amsterdam, it was widely accepted as a veracious chronicle, and "many read whole chapters before" their eyes were opened as to the satirical purpose of its "wit and drollery." One of the most accomplished colonial Dutchmen of the time, Verplanck, wrote of it, "more in sorrow than anger," as a painful instance of historical injustice; and indeed there are passages in the book, as the description of the powerful army with preposterous names, congregated for the defence of their stronghold, not unsuited to provoke that most touchy of all sentiments, hereditary patriotism. As an example, take the following account of the dismissal of General Von Poffenburgh :—

"The vigilant Peter the Headstrong was not to be deceived. Sending privately for the commander-in-chief of all the armies, and having heard all his story with the customary pious oaths, protestations, and ejaculations, 'Harkee, comrade,' cried he, 'though by your own account you are the most brave, upright, and honourable man in the whole province, yet do you lie under the misfortune of being traduced and immeasurably despised. Now, though it is certainly hard to punish a man for his misfortunes, I cannot consent to venture my armies with a commander whom they despise, or to trust the welfare of my people to a champion whom they distrust. Retire, therefore, my friend, from the irksome cares and toils of public life with this comforting reflection—that if guilty, you are but enjoying your just reward; and if innocent, you are not the first great and good man who has most wrongfully been slandered and maltreated in this wicked world, doubtless to be better treated in another world, where there shall be neither error nor calumny nor persecution. In the meantime, let me never see your face again, for I have a horrible antipathy to the countenances of unfortunate great men like yourself.'"

We need hardly wonder that the more zealous of the western New Hollanders should demur to the account of the foundation of their favourite Manhattan, attributed, in this historical novel, to the area covered by the smoke of Van Kortland's pipe, prefiguring, according to Mynheer Ten Broeck, that it was to be "a very vapouring little city;" or to this on the leaders of their corporation—

"The burgomasters were generally chosen by weight. It is a maxim observed in all honest, plain-thinking cities that an alderman should be fat, and the wisdom of this can be proved to a certainty. . . . A lean, spare, diminutive body is generally accompanied by a petulant, restless, meddling mind . . . whereas your round, sleek, unwieldly periphery is ever accompanied by a mind like itself, tranquil, torpid, and at ease. . . . Who ever hears of fat men leading a riot, or herding together in turbulent mobs?"

Nor perhaps are the leaders of Dutch fashion sufficiently grateful for the picture of their ancestresses, of the golden age, who pomatumed back their hair from their foreheads with a candle, "and wore ten modest petticoats of home-spun linsey-woolsey"—

"I remember," adds the wicked historian, "there was a story current when I was a boy, that the wife of Wonter-Van-Twiller once

had occasion to empty her right pocket in search of a wooden ladle, and the utensil was discovered lying among some rubbish in one corner."

"A fine lady in those days waddled under more clothes, even on a fine summer's day, than would have clad the whole bevy of a modern ball-room. Nor were they less admired by the gentlemen in consequence thereof. On the contrary, the greatness of a lover's passion seemed to increase in proportion to the magnitude of its object; and a voluminous damsel . . . was declared by a Low Dutch sonneteer of the province to be radiant as a sunflower and luxuriant as a full-blown cabbage. Certain it is that in those days the heart of a lover could not contain more than one lady at a time, whereas the heart of a modern gallant has room enough to accommodate half a dozen. The reason of which I conclude to be, that either the hearts of the gentlemen have grown larger, or the persons of the ladies smaller: this, however, is a question for physiologists to determine."

Irving being, by the failure of the opulent house to which he belonged, led to make literature a profession instead of a pastime, often recurred to the pseudonym of Knickerbocker, notably in his *Rip Van Winkle*—recently made so vivid to us on the stage by Mr. Jefferson—where we have some of the earliest representations of grave people sadly bent on pleasure, that are with various, often incongrous, adjuncts, still national types. The *Tour of the Prairies*, *The Adventures of Captain Bonneville*, and *Astoria*, belonging to the later years of our author's life, are instinct with the spirit of Western discovery and adventure. No work of his is wanting in powerful passages; but his prevailing characteristics are versatility and grace. He belonged historically to both worlds, and was equally at home in each; he reflected the quiet philosophy of the "Tatler" and "Spectator," adding to it the pathos which dims the eye of the reader over *The Wife*, the *Widow and Son*, the *Broken Heart*, and *Pride of the Village*. He started the vein of burlesque that has run through his country's literature, but under restraints of temperance and culture that have unfortunately been often discarded. The evenness of his manner leads the minor critics of an age delighting in outrages and violence, to do scant justice to

the range of his always unaffected sympathy, and ever genuine passion. His manly but gentle style is at home in Spanish history and English essay, with our Elizabethans as with our Augustans, with "The Stout Gentleman," "all of the olden time," and in "The Rookery" of *Bracebridge Hall;* with the laughter of children round the Christmas hearths of our infancy; in the Alhambra, carved with the memories of Moorish king and maid; and among the slopes of Sleepy Hollow, by which he built his New England home.

Irving died, in a green old age, on the 28th of November 1859, a month to a day before Lord Macaulay: "the Goldsmith and the Gibbon of our time," says Thackeray, in a *Roundabout Paper*, from which we may steal half a dozen sentences. "Of these eminent literary men, one was the first ambassador whom the New World of letters sent to the Old. He was born almost with the republic; the Pater Patriæ had laid his hand on the child's head. He bore Washington's name; he came amongst us bringing the kindest sympathy, the most artless, smiling good will. . . . His domain on the beautiful Hudson River . . . was but a pretty little cabin of a place. The gentleman of the press, who took notes of it while his kind old host was sleeping, might have visited the whole in a couple of minutes. And how came it that this house was so small, when Mr. Irving's books were sold by hundreds of thousands, and the habits of life of the good old bachelor were so notoriously simple? He had loved once in his life. The lady he loved died; and he whom all the world loved never sought to replace her. . . . Does not the very cheerfulness of his after life add to the pathos of that untold story? To grieve always was not in his nature, or, when he had his sorrow, to bring all the world in to condole with him or bemoan it. Deep and quiet he lays the love of his heart, and grass and flowers grow over the scarred ground. . . . He could only live very

modestly, because the wifeless, childless man had a number of children [nine nieces] to whom he was as a father. I don't know what sort of memorial will be raised to him in his own country . . . but he was in our service as well as theirs. I would like to hear of some memorial raised by English writers and friends of letters, in affectionate remembrance of the dear and good Washington Irving."

We pass to brief consideration of a less gentle, but on the whole a greater, power. Irving's fame has, for some time, been unduly eclipsed; that of the greatest, with one exception, of American novelists, J. FENIMORE COOPER, has seldom been sufficiently recognised. In their portraits you can read the differences of their characters: they had genius in common, industry and honesty, and good descent, but little more. That Irving made no enemies seems to me his weak point: that Cooper made too many was, if not his fault, at least his misfortune, for he was involved in frequent lawsuits, and nearly in duels. He was born in 1789, and after his education at Yale, from 1802-1805, served for six years as a midshipman in the navy, gathering experience of which he made ample use. In 1821 he published his first important book, *The Spy*, a patriotic novel; followed by *Lionel Lincoln*, composed in the same spirit. *The Pioneers* came in 1823, with a vivid presentation of the scenery of the author's early life, and established his place as a new actor on a crowded stage. Then followed the *Pilot*, in which he first asserted his claims to an empire, his own among novelists, that of the sea; and, somewhat later, *The Last of the Mohicans*, and the *Prairie*, in which, with some echoes from Scott, he made good a similar sway over the hills and valleys of the remoter West. In the course of a tour abroad he wrote his *Red Rover*, and the *Bravo*,—a tale of Venice, which contains some of his most vivid descriptions, as that of the Regatta,—and flung on the aspersers of his country *The American in Europe*. On his

return he issued his *Homeward Bound*, a satirical assault on newspaper editors and other delinquents; that led him into several actions for libel, in which he claims to have been almost uniformly successful. The *Pathfinder*, 1840, and the *Deerslayer*, 1841,—the latter perhaps the best of the "Leather Stocking" series,—complete the list of his great novels; unless we add the *Satanstoe*, a vigorous exposition and denunciation of a set of men who had become rioters and martyrs in defence of a communistic theory, that tenants were to hold lands and pay no rent for them—a theory and practice, among a sensible and law-abiding people, promptly crushed.

It is impossible in the case of Cooper, as of Irving, to do him any justice by quotations, for his genius is panoramic rather than dioramic: we must sit out a whole scene, or even act, to realise the power of the dramatist. There is, moreover, a certain severity in his style, which restricts the range of his readers. He often wastes words on circumstance, is exhaustive where he might have been suggestive; and his plots —a remark that does not apply to the *Red Rover*, where from first to last there is not a dull page—are apt to drag; and he has carried too far the practice of trotting out a single character, and making us accompany him—as Trollope and even Thackeray are apt to do—through the lives of his men and women, from the cradle to the grave. Lowell animadverts on this, perhaps over severely:—

> "He has drawn you one character, though, that is new,
> One wildflower he's plucked that is wet with the dew
> Of this fresh Western World; and the thing not to mince,
> He has done naught but copy it ill ever since;
> His Indians—with proper respect be it said—
> Are just Natty Bumpo daubed over with red."

Cooper's imagination was even more decidedly kindled by the study of Sir Walter Scott than that of Irving by the study of Addison, and his themes, though far removed in

space, are many of them similar in character. As in the works of the Scotch novelist, the semi-barbarous feudal spirit is represented in conflict with modern law; in those of the Transatlantic romancer the enterprise of New England is struggling with the ruggedness of nature and a savage life. The fierce and generous Highland chiefs, lairds, caterans, and thieves of the one are the equivalents of the noble redskins in the other. But Cooper is nevertheless an American to the core: he needs no slang or affectation to establish his originality, but moves in his own path, with something like disdain of comment. His best descriptions, as that of the prairie on fire, of the Ariel among the shoals, of the capture of the whale and the panther in *The Pioneers*, and of the last sea-fight, after the Red Rover suddenly shows his colours, are unsurpassed, and often thrilling. Cooper's ships are grander if not truer than Marryat's: they move over the seas, in calm and tempest, like things of life. He is not concerned with the "grog and biscuit" of the crews, but with the great designs and fiery passions of the captains or the high-souled pirates, who, like Byron's Conrad and Lara, enlist our reluctant sympathies. His hunters—remnants of a race exploded by the railway and telegraph—traverse the great wilds of grass and wood and water with a sense of possession. His best characters are few, but Natty Bumpo, Bob Yarn, Nightingale, the Rover, Long Tom Coffin, Hetty Hunter, and Maud Merideth, are undying creations. As for the author, we like him, as we like Savage Landor, because he was free and fierce and strong.

Of minor writers of romance, belonging to the first half of the century, in the West, there is a plethora. Cartloads of Tales and Sketches, evincing various degrees of talent, alive or dead or moribund, are heaped on the shelves of the libraries. A mere catalogue, with a statement of their subjects, would occupy half a chapter. Of the imaginative works devoted to half-historic revivals of the past, the most successful is the

Letters from Palmyra, otherwise known as *Zenobia*, published, in 1836, by the highly-accomplished Unitarian clergyman, William Ware. This work, which in point of interest and life-like restoration of classic times, is only surpassed by Landor's *Pericles and Aspasia*, was followed by *Letters from Rome*, or *Probus*, a sequel to *Zenobia*, giving an account of the persecutions under Aurelian, and, in 1841, by *Julian, or Scenes in Judea*. These lose less in freshness than many continuations, but the writer's fame rests most securely on his first essay. Of fictions bearing on American society, the novels of W. G. Simms, whose fertile brain is said to have produced fifty volumes in twenty years, are worthy of note; but his vigorous work is marred by haste and the glaringly one-sided view which makes the author draw all his gentlemen from the south, all his clowns from the north, of Mason and Dixon's line. J. K. Paulding, Irving's associate, deserves a distinct place as a delineator of character, for his vivid pictures of early colonial life in *The Dutchman's Fireside* and *Westward Ho!* where the features of the contest between the new settlers and the aborigines are brought before us in clear relief, in a humorous atmosphere. His apologue of *Bull and Jonathan*, and the thirteen good farms over which they squabbled, founded on Swift's *Tale of a Tub*, presents us, in a satire which lies on the border of irony and a rougher form of wit, with an early American view of the relations between his own and the mother country. To the highest rank in this class belongs Longfellow's *Kavanagh*, a perfect prose idyll of a schoolhouse in the West. His *Hyperion* is a beautiful blending of romance, description, and criticism. The most poetical, though not the most powerful, outcome of American travel, it has about it the indefinable fascination of the older time which is nearer the youth of the world. The Rhine runs through its pure pages, as by the Lore-Ley Rock, before the scream of the iron horse had

banished the Fay. The Alps overshadow it, with the yet untrodden Jungfrau snows, before Interlachen, nestling by the margin of the Aar, had its quietudes shaken by the clatter of innumerable tongues; and the Righi was only beginning to be vulgarised. The book is a pæan of the "exulting and abounding river," scarce second to *Childe Harold* in the transfiguring light thrown over its "thousand battles;" and over the legends, from that of the Christ of Andernach to that of Stolzenfells and Liebenstein, brought back to us as ghosts from the tomb. As a story it exceeds in discussions, which, although the medium of always appreciative and often subtle estimates, as that of Jean Paul Richter and the Minnesingers, want the dramatic element. The sentimental passages, as those of Bulwer's *Pilgrims on the Rhine*, however relieved by humour, may provoke the sneers of an age like ours, intolerant of sentiment, and willing in its place to endure buffoonery; and there are frequent remarks that appear commonplaces now, when the originality of the last generation has got into the air we breathe; but the work as a whole is lovable, as all from the author's hand. While Ehrenbreitstein flashes in the morning, and the ruins of Heidelberg glow in the evening, light, "as long as splashing boat oar" ruffles the breast of the German stream, the images of Paul Fleming and Mary Ashburton will float on its surface, like swan and shadow.

America superabounds in didactic fiction, novels, or stories written with a purpose; the most famous of which, Mrs. Stowe's *Uncle Tom*, with the works of Judd and Holmes, we reserve for later review. Among minor works worthy of note are *The Bee Hunter*, and other narratives of the South-west, by T. B. Thorpe of Baton Rouge; John Neal's *Rachel Dyer* and *Ruth Elder;* Mrs. E. O. Smith's *Indian Reminiscences; The Linwoods*, a picture of New England village life, and *Hope Leslie*, a protest on behalf of the virtuous poor, by Miss Sedgwick,

also author of the lives of the precocious and short-lived sisters Davidson; Theodore S. Fay's *Countess Ida* and *Norman Leslie*, vigorous pamphlets, in story, directed against the practice of duelling; Mrs. Lydia Child's *Hobomok*, a tale of Puritan times, and her *Philothea*, a romance of the age of Pericles, somewhat too sentimental in its style, and not free from anachronisms; Verplanck's *Major Egerton*, and, written jointly with Sands and Bryant, his *Talisman;* Herman Melville's tales of the Pacific Islands, *Omoo* and *Typee;* Bird's *Calavar* and *The Infidel*, both associated with the fall of Mexico, whose graphic accuracy is worthy of note, as preceding the works of Prescott. The light but always graceful and often incisive sketches of N. P. Willis take a somewhat higher rank. A writer whose rapidity prevented him ever doing justice to his powers, he had the skill to make his verses pay, and the merit of being conspicuously kind to struggling competitors. At his best a brilliant colourist, his fertile fancy has been employed in almost all the countries of Europe and in his own with more than average success. His *Pencillings by the Way* and *People I Have Met* are among the most agreeable of books for a leisure hour. His descriptions are always interesting as well as accurate, and his characters, grave and gay, generally lifelike. His picture of the Indian girl "Nunu," in the *Inklings of Adventure*, is fascinating and vivacious enough to be worthy of a higher artist.

Three-fourths of the literary men of America have crossed the Atlantic, and nine-tenths of those who have done so have published their impressions of the Old World, with every variety of good and bad taste, from the *Old Home* to the *Innocents Abroad*. Next to that of his birth, an American author's travels are the essential of his being. We may predict his praise of Italy; half-satirical half-envious view of England, and his wonder at the Pyramids. Of the multifarious descriptions of Europe, to which this habit has

given birth, the worthiest of note are those of Longfellow, in *Outre-Mer;* of Hawthorne and Emerson; of Story and Cheever; Hillard and Norton's *Italian Sketches;* Cushing's *Recollections of Spain;* and the *Nile Notes of a Howadji*, by GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS; a work which, for its charm of style and warmth of Eastern air, ranks with Mr. Kinglake's *Eothen.* In the *Lotus Eating* of the same author we have pleasing reminiscences of the watering-places of his own country. But the most interesting records of Western scenery are FREMONT'S *Exploring Expedition;* Winthrop's *Canoe and Saddle* and *Life in the Open Air;* T. Starr King's *White Hills;* with the numerous remarkable *Excursions* of Emerson's leading pupil, H. D. Thoreau; his *Maine Woods, Cape Cod,* and *Merrimack;* to which we should add *Two Years before the Mast* and the *Vacation Voyage to Cuba* of the younger Dana.

The majority of the historians, romancers, and poets of America have made contributions of various, some of great, value to contemporary criticism. In reading Prescott's *Miscellanies* we feel there is little to add to his estimates of Brown, Bancroft, and Irving, among his countrymen; of Cervantes, or Moliere, or the minor Italians, abroad. Longfellow's *Poets and Poetry of Europe* is an always appreciative, and from his hands inevitably graceful, if not an exhaustive, work. Lowell's *Fable for Critics* (to which we shall revert), and his excellent little volume on Chaucer and our old dramatists, entitled *Conversations with the Poets*, belong to this period.[1] Among its minor reviewers it is, owing to their multitude, hard to select. The most rapid survey should acknowledge the carefully-conscientious work of George S. Hillard, one of the most highly-cultured writers in New England; the genuine, though sometimes indiscriminate, enthusiasm of Henry T. Tuckerman's *Thoughts on the Poets;*

[1] For notice of some later developments of American criticism cf. Chapter XII.

Halleck's contributions to the *Croaker Papers* in the "New York Evening Post," lively and fair in the main, despite his absurd preference of Thomas Campbell to Lord Byron; Griswold's numerous volumes of selection and commentary; and Charles Follen's admirable lectures on Goethe and Schiller, the outcome of his brief professorship of German literature at Harvard, with numerous able articles in the "North American Review" and "Atlantic Monthly." Many of the critics of the time are apt to be led astray by the amiable weakness of over admiration. They wonder too readily, and scatter their praise abroad to the lessening of its value, and the encouragement of mediocrities. This tendency Edgar Allan Poe set himself, with a praiseworthy sense of "judex damnatur," and with some practical good results, to counteract. His *Quacks of Helicon*, and such articles as those on Rufus Dawes, T. Ward, W. Lord, and Cornelius Matthews, frequently remind us of Lord Macaulay's review of Robert Montgomerie, and ought to be reprinted, with some changes of name, for the benefit of a later generation. Unfortunately Poe was led, by personal animosity, prejudice, or misconception, to treat with equal rancour some of his contemporaries, as Lowell, Longfellow, and Emerson, whose reputations are above assault. On the other hand, his quick, though modified, recognition of the genius of Hawthorne, and his glowing notice of R. H. Horne's *Orion*, is remarkable.

We are apt to hear too much of "a high tone" in criticism from writers who, having no artistic sense, think to supply its place by a spurious pulpit oratory. They can only rave at Beaumont and Fletcher, reprobate George Sand, and take a malignant delight in making an example of Lord Byron. This tendency to preach, in and out of season, naturally infected the judgments of the Puritans of New England when they first began to read the poets. It is nowhere more conspicuous than in some of the lectures of

the famous J. Quincy Adams, who, in his youth, as Professor of Belles Lettres, had ample scope to display his strength and weakness as a critic. His admirers have dwelt on his Shakespearian lore, and selected for especial thanksgiving his comments on *Othello*. The following excerpt will suffice to show the subtlety of his analysis. It may be recommended to the moralists of the London "Spectator," as the most flagrant instance of platitude and absurdity extant, outside the ranks of the "New Shakspere Society," from which it takes away all pretension to be, in any nonsense, original:—

"I have said that since I entered upon the third of Shakespeare's Seven Ages, the first and chief capacity in which I have read and studied him is as *a teacher of morals*. . . . My objections to the character of Desdemona arise not from what Iago, or Roderigo, or Brabantio, or Othello says of her;" (he admits that the first, though "a very intelligent," is "a double-dealing" man, "full of ingenuity to devise base expedients") "but from what she does herself. She absconds from her father's house in the dead of night, to marry a blackamoor. She breaks her father's heart, and covers his noble house with shame, to gratify . . . unnatural passion; it cannot be named with delicacy. . . . If Othello had been white, what need would there have been for her running away with him? She could have made no better match. Her father could have made no reasonable objection to it. . . . The father of Desdemona charges Othello with magic arts in obtaining the affections of his daughter. Why, but because her passion for him is unnatural; and why is it unnatural, but because of his colour? . . . I cannot in decency quote here (*i.e.* to the Harvard undergraduates); but turn to the book, and see in what language Iago announces to her father his daughter's shameful misconduct. The language of Roderigo is more supportable. He is a Venetian gentleman. . . . Indeed! indeed! I must look upon Shakespeare . . . in his capacity of a teacher of morals. . . . The first action of Desdemona discards all female delicacy, all filial duty, all sense of ingenuous shame. So I consider it, and so it is considered by her father. Her offence is not a mere clandestine elopement. I hope it requires no unreasonable rigour of morality to consider even that as suited to raise a prepossession rather unfavourable to the character of a young woman of refined sensibility." On the line, "The wealthy curled darlings of our nation," he remarks, "Several of the English commentators have puzzled themselves with the inquiry why the epithet 'curled' is here applied to the wealthy darlings of the nation; and Dr. Johnson thinks it has no reference to the hair, but it evidently has. The *curled* hair is in antithetic contrast to the sooty brown, the thick lips, and the woolly

head. . . . That the moral lesson to be learnt from the play is of no practical utility in England may be true. . . . The lesson, however, is not the less couched under the form of an admirable drama; nor needs it any laborious effort of the imagination to extend the moral precept resulting from the story to a salutory admonition against all ill-assorted, clandestine, and unnatural marriages."

Twenty years later we have from the American pulpit itself, in pleasing contrast, an example of what is really a "high tone" in criticism, viz., the impartial application of a rigidly impersonal standard, and the association of Art with the larger emotions and nobler interests of human life. Dr. CHANNING'S work is so far from that of a mere intellectual sensualist that he has been called a purist; but he loved Beauty as well as Virtue for its own sake, and his style is generally free from the defects of taste frequent in the writings of his contemporaries. The *Essay on National Literature* (1824), by which his reputation was first made, is singularly suggestive, and only errs by the intrusion, here and there, of anti-Calvinistic polemic. His review of Fénélon abounds in passages, as the often quoted picture of religious peace, which exhibit the delicacy of his perceptions; but the breadth and force of his sympathy is most manifest in his *Remarks on Milton*, à propos of the publication of the posthumous *De Doctrinâ Christianâ*. That this treatise was much to Channing's mind appears in the theological part of his review. We are more concerned to call attention to its appreciation, then rare, of Milton's prose, to its fair view of his relation to Dr. Johnson, and to its anticipation of the now hackneyed truism that the hell of the great iconoclast poet "yields to the spirit which it imprisons. . . Its intense fires reveal the intenser passions and more vehement will of the ruined archangel, who gathers into himself the sublimity of the scene which surrounds him." Perhaps, however, the most beautiful page of this justly famous review is the comment on our first parents in their "Bower of Bliss:"

"Their new existence has the freshness and peacefulness of the dewy morning. Their souls, unsated and untainted, find an innocent joy in the youthful creation, which spreads and smiles around them. Their mutual love is deep, for it is the love of young, unworn, unexhausted hearts, which meet in each other the only human objects on whom to pour forth their fulness of affection; and still it is serene, for it is the love of happy beings, who know not suffering even by name, whose innocence excludes not only the tumults but the thought of jealousy and shame, who, 'imparadised in one another's arms,' scarce dream of futurity, so blessed is their present being. We will not say that we envy our first parents; for we feel that there may be higher happiness than theirs, a happiness won through struggle with inward and outward foes, the happiness of power and moral victory, the happiness of disinterested sacrifices and widespread love, the happiness of boundless hope, and of 'thoughts which wander through eternity.' Still there are times, when the spirit, oppressed with pain, worn with toil, tired of tumult, sick at the sight of guilt, wounded in its love, baffled in its hope, and trembling in its faith, almost longs for the 'wings of a dove, that it might fly away' and take refuge amidst the 'shady bowers,' the 'vernal airs,' the 'roses without thorns,' the quiet, the beauty, the loveliness of Eden. It is the contrast of this deep peace of Paradise with the storms of life which gives to the fourth and fifth books of this poem a charm so irresistible that not a few would sooner relinquish the two first books, with all their sublimity, than part with these. It has sometimes been said that the English language has no good pastoral poetry. We would ask, in what age or country has the pastoral reed breathed such sweet strains as are borne to us on 'the odoriferous wings of gentle gales' from Milton's Paradise?"

In a rapid survey of this prolific age, we can only signalise its contributions to Philological Criticism and the several branches of Science, physical and mental. In the exploration of animate Nature, AUDUBON succeeded to the Bertrams and to Wilson; and so far surpassed them in artistic power that his descriptions have, from an artistic point of view, been compared to Buffon. He remains, to this day, the one conspicuous literary glory of Louisiana. During the last two generations, the United States have been justly proud of the names of Morton and Schoolcraft in Ethnology, of BOWDITCH in Mathematics, of Silliman and Dana in Chemistry and Mineralogy, of Loomis and Wells in Natural Philosophy, and, above all, of their greatest literary import, the Swiss AGASSIZ.

Their classical scholarship has been well maintained by the Everetts, Lewis, Felton, Woolsey, Anthon, and Robinson. Dr. Frederick Hedge has done much to keep alive an interest in "German Literature" by his lectures; and Charles T. Brooks even more, by his admirable translations of the main works of Jean Paul Richter. W. D. Whitney and Dr. Marsh are among the most accurate modern philologists—the latter an excellent and deservedly popular writer. R. C. White is known as a learned editor of Shakespeare, and H. N. Hudson as an able commentator; Dr. Child is one of the foremost authorities in old English, especially ballad literature. Worcester has worthily followed Webster in lexicography. The metaphysical school of Locke is nowhere better represented than in America by Dr. Bowen, nor the views of Herbert Spencer more sytematically developed than in the "Cosmical Philosophy" of John Fiske, nor those of Swedenborg than by Dr. George Bush. Horace Bushnell is acknowledged as an original divine; Dr. Hodge and Jacob Abbott as good popular expositors of the orthodox theology. The place of Marshall as a jurist has been filled by Chief-Justice Kent and Judge Story; Wheaton is over Europe the leading authority on International Law; while HORACE MANN, by his combination of large practical experience and insight into character, has elevated Education into a science, the principles of which he expounds with remarkable richness of illustration, frequently humorous, and a general grace of style rare in his profession. It were even further beyond our province to pass judgment on the numerous artists, conspicuously the great sculptors, by whom America has been adorned. We can only offer a tribute of recognition to the names of Copley, Allston, West, Leslie, Greenough, Church, Powers, Bierstadt, and Story.

CHAPTER VI.

REPRESENTATIVE POETS OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

BRYANT—LONGFELLOW—WHITMAN—POE.

In spite of the melodious preludes of minor versifiers, De Tocqueville was still able, in 1835, to assert, with some plausibility, that America had not yet produced a single poet of a high order. At that time there only existed a single poem to contradict him; and the collective works of the author of this poem seem to vindicate another generalisation of the French critic. He remarks "that, in democratic communities, where men are all socially insignificant, and each one sees his fellows when he sees himself, poetry will be less apt to celebrate individuals"; that it will seldom be dramatic, but will incline to dwell either on external nature or on the ideas which concern humanity in general: it will be either descriptive or abstract. The poem I refer to is reflective and descriptive, and its author, WILLIAM CULLEN BRYANT, is a poet of nature and contemplation.

It is told of Bryant that, while on a visit to England many years ago, he called at Rydal Mount, and was received with the somewhat surly salutation—"Well, sir, you are, I believe, an American poet. I never read American poetry; I never read any poetry but my own." "But," interrupted a more sympathetic member of the family, "this is the author

of *Thanatopsis*, which only the other week you repeated to me from memory." As one of the best illustrations of a phase of Transatlantic thought, I shall quote the concluding lines of the poem that William Wordsworth had learnt by heart—

> "Yet not to thine eternal resting place
> Shalt thou retire alone—nor couldst thou wish
> Couch more magnificent. Thou shalt lie down
> With patriarchs of the infant world—with kings,
> The powerful of the earth—the wise, the good,
> Fair forms and hoary seers of ages past,
> All in one mighty sepulchre. The hills,
> Rock-ribbed and ancient as the sun—the vales
> Stretching in pensive quietness between;
> The venerable woods—rivers that move
> In majesty, and the complaining brooks
> That make the meadows green; and poured round all,
> Old ocean's gray and melancholy waste,—
> Are but the solemn decorations all
> Of the great tomb of man. The golden sun,
> The planets, all the infinite host of heaven,
> Are shining on the sad abodes of death
> Through the still lapse of ages. All that tread
> The globe are but a handful to the tribes
> That slumber in its bosom—take the wings
> Of morning—and the Barcan desert pierce,
> Or lose myself in the continuous woods
> Where rolls the Oregon and hears no sound
> Save his own dashings—yet—the dead are there."

The reason why Bryant has never surpassed, and seldom equalled, this effort of his youth, is to be found partly in the cast of his mind, which is characterised by a narrow greatness; and partly in the fact that, during the great portion of his life, he has been forced "to scrawl strange words with the barbarous pen," as the editor of a daily newspaper—a fact to which he makes a touching reference at the close of his *Green River*. But no one of his compeers has penetrated so deeply into the western woods as Bryant has done. He has lived in thronging streets, an honest and energetic politician; but, in his leisure hours, his fancy has roamed away

to breezy hills and valleys, and the undulating sea of the prairies—

> " the gardens of the desert,
> The unshorn fields boundless and beautiful,
> For which the speech of England has no name."

The perpetual autumn of his writings is peculiar. They lead us to the margin of plains, broader than English shires ; by the banks of rivers, flowing oceanward, through sombre wildernesses, and over fallen leaves. Bryant has written smoothly, in various measures ; but he is never lively. An American Alastor, he loves " the air that cools the twilight of the sultry day " better than morning " clad in russet vest." In the beautiful verses on the *Death of the Flowers*, his ear catches a dirgelike tune in the wind—

> " The south wind searches for the flowers whose fragrance late he bore,
> And sighs to find them in the wood and by the stream no more."

The high rank grass of the wild meadow is, to his eye, the garniture of the graves of a race represented by his *Disinterred Warrior*. Devoid of the exuberance of his contemporaries, he lingers " where old empires sit in sullenness and gloom," and contemplates " the living present " with resignation rather than hope. All his best pieces, as *The Evening Wind*, the *Forest Hymn*, *Monument Mountain*, the *Burial Place*, and *The Past*, are set to the same slow music, and pervaded by the thought of life as the avenue of death ; and even the poem on *The Catterskill Falls*, which begins with a flash of light, all but ends in a tragedy. If we compare his address *To a Waterfowl* with Wordsworth's or with Shelley's *Skylark*, we appreciate the monotony of his mind, which is, like that of Cowper, without Cowper's occasional vivacity. Even his patriotic impulses, as far as they have vent in his verse, seem, like the love of Coleridge's knight, " long subdued." The *Song of Marion's Men*, fresh and strong though it be, is muffled in the branches of the trees round whose

roots there smile his cerulean *Fringed Gentian*, "alone in the virgin air," and the *Yellow Violet*, "half hidden from the eye."

> "Our fortress is the good green wood,
> Our tent the cypress tree;
> We know the forest round us,
> As seamen know the sea,"

is more like a catch of Robin Hood, or the followers of the philosophic Duke in Arden, than the war-cry of a guerilla chief. The same feeling, with an obvious echo of the *Lucy* of his great model, pervades what Edgar Poe, in a notice recognising the poet's rhythmic skill, pronounces his "truest poem"—

> "Oh, fairest of the rural maids!
> Thy birth was in the forest shades;
> Green boughs and glimpses of the sky
> Were all that met thy infant eye.
>
> "Thy sports, thy wanderings when a child
> Were ever in the sylvan wild;
> And all the beauty of the place
> Is in thy heart and on thy face.
>
> "The twilight of the trees and rocks
> Is in the light shade of the locks;
> Thy step is as the wind that weaves
> Its playful way among the leaves.
>
> "Thy eyes are springs, in whose serene
> And silent waters heaven is seen;
> Their lashes are the herbs that look
> On their figures in the brook.
>
> "The forest depths, by foot impressed
> Are not more sinless than thy breast;
> The holy peace that fills the air
> Of those calm solitudes is there."

Bryant stands on a high level, but the space he covers is limited: he has no touch of humour, and only the distant pathos of prevailing melancholy. Master of his position where he is at home, in the woods, his excursions are generally weak: he loses his inspiration when he draws near even his own cities. His exclusive nature-worship has a

parallel in the feeling which animates some of the most graphic passages in New England prose; such as the following from one of Emerson's earlier essays:—

"It is the halcyon season of our pure October weather. The day, immeasurably long, sleeps over the broad hills and warm wide fields. To have lived through all its sunny hours seems longevity enough. The solitary places do not seem quite lonely. At the gates of the forest, the surprised man of the world is forced to leave his city estimates of great and small, wise and foolish. The knapsack of custom falls off his back with the first step he makes into these precincts. Here is sanctity which shames our religions, and reality which discredits our heroes. Here we find nature to be the circumstance which dwarfs every other circumstance, and judges, like a god, all men that come to her. We have crept out of our crowded houses into the night and morning. . . . The incommunicable trees begin to persuade us to live with them and quit our life of solemn trifles. Here no history, or church, or State, is interpolated on the divine sky and the immortal year."

It is evident that this is a one-sided spirit; but it is a spirit with which we have all an occasional sympathy: to a disposition like that of Bryant it is permanently congenial. Thus, in the following verse, he gives voice to the impulse which, even in settled countries, often induces eccentric men of culture to banish themselves, for a season, from society — the impulse which made captive the "Scholar Gipsy," which the hero of Locksley Hall welcomes for a moment, and then rejects :—

"Ay! this is freedom; these pure skies
Were never stained with village smoke;
The fragrant wind that through them flies
Is breathed from wastes by plough unbroke.
Here with my rifle and my steed,
And her who left the world for me,
I plant me where the red deer feed
In the green forest, and am free."

Imaginative and ardent minds, oppressed by what Mr. Arnold calls "this strange disease of modern life," try to escape from the region of the real Drama into that of the ideal Lyric—"arva beata petamus, arva, divites et insules"—and have, now and then, endeavoured to convert it into an actual

Idyll, as when Thoreau buried himself in a log hut by Walden lake; or Theodore Winthrop, leaving his ledgers in New York, scoured over the crags of Oregon; or Horne, with his *Orion* still unsold, was found mining in a quarry of New South Wales. But this *émigré* spirit, when put into practice, ultimately cures itself: a poet soon tires of working with his hands for a livelihood. The aspirations of Clough's *Bothie* are stifled by the *vitiosæ curæ* of a hard life, or terminate in the catastrophes of a fanaticism such as Hawthorne has branded with his genius in the *Blithedale Romance*. The philosophical refugees find that the solitude they desired charms only by its contrast with the civilisation they have left, as the beauty of the sea is its contrast with the shore. But this wandering impulse, strong in the ancient Greek and the modern English race, has colonised and civilised the world. It is especially strong in the Anglo-American; the very restlessness which makes his cities so noisy bids him long for a remoter rest; and this longing acts, in conjunction with more material demands, to drive him across the Mississippi, and pioneer the way to the Pacific. Bryant's poetry is remarkable, among other things, for the extent to which it embodies the same national characteristic that has contributed to people the shores of the Salt Lake, and he embodies it with full poetic confidence, perhaps because he himself had never tried the experiment which it suggests. His cold clear light, pure steadfast purpose, and remote benignity, are better represented by his own stately hymn to the north star than by pages of panegyric or tiresome commentary—

"The sad and solemn night
Has yet her multitude of cheerful fires;
The glorious host of light
Walk the dark hemisphere till she retires;
All through her silent watches, gliding slow,
Her constellations come and climb the heavens, and go.
. . . . . .

"And, therefore, bards of old,
Sages and hermits of the solemn wood,
Did in thy beams behold
A beauteous type of that unchanging good,
That bright, eternal beacon, by whose ray
The voyager of time should shape his heedful way."

I have said that the best literature of America belongs to New England. Bryant is no exception to this statement,—a native of Massachusetts, he was only an emigrant in the Empress City.

HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW was born in 1807 in Maine. His native town, Portland, is built on the shore of Casco Bay, which lies, with the throng of islands "that were the Hesperides of" his "boyish dreams," on the edge of the Atlantic, and under "the shadow of Deering's woods." Sent at an early age to Bowdoin College in Brunswick—girt by pine groves near the Androscoggin Falls, in the heart of a district of Indian Legends—he graduated there in his nineteenth year, and was appointed to the professorship of modern languages. After an interval, a considerable part of which was spent on the Continent, he was invited to succeed Mr. Ticknor, in a similar professorship at Harvard, and this second appointment was followed by a second visit to Europe. His first published work appeared in 1839, since when he issued a volume, on the average, every two years.

The Universities of America combine and harmonise some of the best features of the English and the German; the freedom of the latter with the social bonds of a common life, tending to inspire that admirable and healthy spirit, the "*esprit de corps*," of youthful and enthusiastic natures. The great national struggle of twenty years ago, when Harvard sent her finest blood to the battlefields of the Union, made this link still closer. To the teachers there is supplied—what in their country is so much required—opportunity for learned

leisure and the self-culture, which independence alone makes possible. The Americans have not forgotten that universities ought to be centres of repose as well as of activity, that they should never be mere servants of the Exchange—that their function is to promote, as well as to communicate, thought, and to elevate their age by setting a standard above its restlessness. The absence of sectarian elements in the best of these institutions, with the wide range of their studies, tends to make them worthy of their name. The fact that the Chairs of Harvard are offered to the men who seem fitted to fill them, excludes open competition, and does much to disarm petty jealousies. Nothing strikes a stranger more pleasantly than the concord that seems to prevail in the literary circles of New England. Cambridge on the Charles is the centre of a golden brotherhood, the members of which are as keen in discovering each others merits, as in some parts of the world they are in descanting on each others defects. Neighbouring satirists, indeed, have cavilled at their excess of appreciation; but of two evils, it is preferable to excess of disparagement. Among the retreats where scholars and artists meet in pleasant fellowship, none is so esteemed and venerated as the old house, with its avenue of many-tinted trees, on the Mount Auburn road, where Washington held his headquarters in the Revolution War—a home dear to the patriot for its past, to the student for its present—where dwelt in the beautiful autumn of a beautiful life, *ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν*, the poet Longfellow.

We are justified in referring to the circumstances of the author's life, because they help to explain the leading features of his work—its European flavour, the moralising of a teacher that pervades it, and its serenity, as of church bells ringing beside a quiet shore. A great part of his prose and verse is like the literature of an emigrant: it is overladen with culture, and burdened with the music of intellectual luxury. Longfellow has none of the vague grandeur, uncouth power,

or spasmodic exaggeration of his Western contemporaries : he has all the grace and polish and unity, with here and there a touch of the effeminacy, of the East. His works are not only free from the special defects, but devoid of the peculiar merits, that mark the more strictly national literature of his country. His fancy recrosses the Atlantic for the inspiration which many derive from the past. Now and then he gives us glimpses of the hoar frost silvering his native pines, or, heaping the logs on the hearth, sits down to tell us a New England tale; but the majority of his minor poems are drawn from the same experiences and memories as his *Hyperion* and *Outre-Mer*. Like Irving in the variety of his culture, superior in genius, his imagination is rather Teutonic than English. Cut Germany out of his volume, and you cut out nearly half. He lingers in feudal towers or Flemish towns, and chooses for his emblem of life's river, not the Ohio, or the Hudson, or the Assabeth, but "the Moldau's rushing stream." He has given us the best existing translations from Swedish, Danish, and Spanish, and among the best from Italian. His incomparable renderings of *The Silent Land*, *The Castle by the Sea*, *Coplas de Manrique*, and a score of others, have all the charm of original compositions, A large proportion of his verses are allowedly suggested by half-forgotten proverbs, or sentences, or fragments of romance. A few words from a French author give him the burden of the *Old Clock on the Stair;* a leaf out of Mather's *Magnalia Christi* is rhymed into *The Phantom Ship;* the ballad of the Count Arnaldos sets him dreaming over the *Secret of the Sea;* a verse of Euripides is the keynote of his *Voices of the Night;* a few lines from Goethe gather up the essence of his *Psalm of Life*. In the New World, but not wholly of it, he dwells with almost wearisome fondness on the World "Old." Volumes of old days, old associations that we cannot buy with gold, quaint old cities—Nuremberg, Bruges, and Prague, old poets and painters—Becerra and Bassalin,

Albert Durer, and Hans Sachs the cobbler bard, sweet old songs, old haunted houses, the gray old manse, Nature the dear old nurse, dear old England—on phrases and thoughts like these his fancy broods.

American verse is frequently rough-hewn and audacious, often pedantic, and its novelty is sometimes more striking than its reality. Longfellow, on the other hand, seldom gives us new thoughts, but he puts our best thoughts into the best words with that high art which conceals itself. He cannot create, but he cannot touch without adorning. There is nothing in his works of the world-revealing insight of the deepest penetrative imagination; but from nature, man, and books he constantly throws new illuminations on homely truth. Woods in winter, a mason hewing blocks of stone, a Greek legend, a broad river of the West, a gleam of sun, a bunch of sea-weed, a handful of red sand, are occasions consecrated, like the friends he addresses in his fine memorial sonnets. There is nothing startling or *outré*, or "wild and wondrous" in *The Village Blacksmith*, or *The Reaper*, *The Beleaguered City*, *The Light of Stars*, *The Bridge*, or *The Rainy Day*; but, in a degree only inferior to the songs of Burns, they enhance our joys, soften our sorrows, and mix like music with our toil, floating upwards in storm and calm.

"Ever drifting, drifting, drifting,
On the shifting
Currents of the restless heart,
Till at length, in books recorded,
They, like hoarded
Household words, no more depart."

The poem from which those lines are taken is among many conspicuous proofs of Longfellow's command over every English rhythm except blank verse, where he almost always fails; elsewhere he hardly ever uses a word out of tune, and his sense of completeness guides him to round off, in fitting space, the sound as well as the substance of his work. In

illustration of his melody and onomatopœic power we may turn to the clanking of the bridal reins in the *Slave's Dream*, the dirge of "the reign of violence" in the *Occultation of Orion*, to the "voices of Eld like trumpets blowing," and "the plunge of the implacable seas" in the description of the minstrel in the *Wayside Inn*, or to this contrast from the *Building of the Ship*—a fine, though close, parallel to Schiller's *Song of the Bell*:—

> "Standing before
> Her father's door
> He saw the form of his promised bride;
> The sun shone on her golden hair,
> And her cheek was glowing fresh and fair
> With the breath of morn and the soft sea air;
> Like a beauteous barge was she
> Still at rest on the sandy beach
> Just beyond the billows' reach;
> But he
> Was the restless, seething, stormy sea."

With the mood of the last line the poet has little sympathy. Wearing his learning lightly, he employs it to illustrate the nooks of life rather than the glare and strife of history. He forgets the "hollow roar" of "fights far away" in remembering

> "The friendships old and the early loves" which
> "Come back with a Sabbath sound as of doves
> In quiet neighbourhoods."

He turns from the emblem of the spear to that of the "lily and the palm;" from the frowns of martial men to

> "Noble types of good
> Heroic womanhood."

An American in his songs of labour, he is repelled by the "loud vociferations of the street," and retires from them into the sanctuary of the *Divina Commedia*. His favourite virtues are endurance, calm; his confidants, gentle hearts; his pet themes the praise and love of children, his *Weariness* being the most exquisite address ever made to them—

"O little feet! that such long years
Must wander on through hopes and fears,
Must ache and bleed beneath your load:
I, nearer to the wayside inn,
Where toil shall cease and rest begin,
Am weary, thinking of your road.

"O little hands! that, weak or strong,
Have still to serve or rule so long,
Have still so long to give or ask;
I, who so much with book and pen
Have toiled among my fellow-men,
Am weary, thinking of your task.

"O little hearts! that throb and beat
With such impatient, feverish heat,
Such limitless and strong desires;
Mine, that so long has glowed and burned
With passions into ashes turned,
Now covers and conceals its fires.

"O little souls! as pure and white
And crystalline as rays of light
Direct from heaven, their source divine;
Refracted through the mist of years,
How red my setting sun appears,
How lurid looks this soul of mine!"

Longfellow is limited in his range, because he is dowered with neither hate nor scorn. Singing glory to God, good-will to men, "his ways are ways of pleasantness, and all his paths are peace." Standing before the Arsenal his fancy hears

"The bursting shell, the gateway wrenched asunder,
The rattling musketry, the clashing blade,
And ever and anon in tones of thunder
The diapason of the cannonade."

But he turns from those discordant noises into the track of his perpetual beneficence—

"Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error
There were no need of arsenals and forts.

"Down the dark future, through long generations,
The echoing sounds grow fainter, and then cease;
And like a bell with solemn sweet vibrations
I hear once more the voice of Christ say, Peace.

"Peace! and no longer from its brazen portals
The blast of war's great organ shakes the skies,
But beautiful as songs of the immortals
The holy melodies of Love arise."

Severe critics, on just grounds, complain of the poet's want of concentration, and of the frequent conventionality of the epithets in his earlier verses—a fault sometimes so conspicuous, that we can almost predict the terms he will apply to a Castilian hidalgo or old minnesinger. Generally speaking, his later work is stronger; more is said in less space, the ideas follow each other more rapidly, and the imagery is more incisive. There is nothing in the *Voices of the Night* so powerful as *Victor Galbraith*, or the *Hebrew Cemetery*, or *Enceladus*, or the verses on the death of Wellington; scarcely anything so effective as the *Bells of Lynn*, the sonnet on the Ponte Vecchio at Florence, *The Cumberland*, the *Castle-builder*, or the best of the *Birds of Passage*. The series of stories, half of home half of foreign growth, grouped together under the title of the *Wayside Inn*, are perhaps unfortunate in suggesting a comparison with Boccaccio or Chaucer; but they are of more varied interest than those in Clough's *Mari Magno*, and passages of the *Saga of Olaf* have the force of an Edda. From the fine prelude or overture to the book, I may quote two characteristic pictures, pictures for which—in one instance unconsciously to the autobiographer—originals may happily be found close to where they were drawn:—

"A Theologian, from the school
Of Cambridge, on the Charles, was there;
Skilful alike with tongue and pen,
He preached to all men everywhere
The Gospel of the Golden Rule,
The New Commandment given to men,

Judging the deed, and not the creed,
Would help us in our utmost need.
With reverent feet the earth he trod,
Nor banished nature from his plan,
But studied still with deep research
To build the Universal Church,
Lofty as is the love of God,
And ample as the wants of man.

. . . . . .

"A Poet, too, was there, whose verse
Was tender, musical, and terse;
The inspiration, the delight,
The gleam, the glory, the swift flight
Of thoughts so sudden that they seem
The revelations of a dream.
All these were his; but with them came
No envy of another's fame;
He does not find his sleep less sweet
For music in some neighbouring street,
Nor rustling hear in every breeze
The laurels of Miltiades.
Honour and blessings on his head
While living, good report when dead,
Who, not too eager for renown,
Accepts, but does not clutch, the crown!"

Of Longfellow's more extensive works his so-called dramas are failures. The Puritan plays in particular are commonplace in matter and bald in versification. The *Spanish Student*, more graceful than impressive, is made musical by the songs, and disfigured by an absurd close. *Miles Standish* is a New England story, with some vigorous touches, but the characters are lay figures—a diminutive Cromwell and Milton, and a female puritan assertor of woman's right to take the initiative. *Evangeline*, as the best specimen of English hexameters, demonstrates the difficulty which attends the introduction of that measure into our language. Lowell writes of it justly as follows:—

"Your modern hexameter verses are no more
Like Greek ones than sleek Mr. Pope is like Homer;
But set that aside, and, 'tis truth that I speak,
Had Theocritus written in English, not Greek,

I believe that his exquisite sense would scarce change a line
In that rare tender virgin-like pastoral *Evangeline*
That's not ancient or modern ; its place is apart
Where time has no sway, in the realm of pure Art :
'Tis a shrine of retreat from earth's hubbub and strife,
As quiet and chaste as the author's own life."

The story is pathetic and founded on history, but here again the characters play a minor part, and the passion is comparatively tame. The power of the poem consists in its vivid realisation of American scenery ; of the Mississippi, father of waters, and the fields of golden grain, and the hunter's camp on the forest edge, and the armies of horses and wolves. The passage beginning "Day after day they glided adown the turbulent river" has been pointed to for its far horizons of western stream and sky, like a landscape of Rembrandt. Longfellow's descriptions are inferior in luxuriance to those of *Enoch Arden*, in subtlety to Browning's Italian pictures : they are superior in simplicity. They do not adorn Nature as a mistress, in the manner of Chateaubriand, with the subjective fancies of a lover : they bring her before us as a faithful nurse, careful for her children. In *Evangeline* the poet follows the wheels of the emigrant's waggon through "billowy bays of grass ever rolling in sunshine and shadow," and "over them wander the buffalo herds and the elk and the roebuck ;" this vivid realisation deepens into intenser poetry in the pathos of the penultimate lines—

"Still stands the forest primeval ; but far away from its shadow,
Side by side, in their nameless graves, the lovers are sleeping.
. . . . . .
Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing beside them ;
Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs are at rest and for ever ;
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no longer are busy ;
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have ceased from their labours ;
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have completed their journey."

The *Golden Legend* carries us to the other ends of the earth —from the trackless forests to the monks of Italy, from an

untried theme to one which half the imitators of Goethe have been bold enough to attempt. This poem—in no sense a drama—is disjointed, and so wanting in unity that it would puzzle most readers who have closed the book to recount its incidents. But it contains the highest flights of the author's imagination, his mellowest music, his richest humour, and some of his most impressive passages. In evidence I would refer to the rhyme of Felix and the beautiful white bird, Elsie's account of Gertrude's death, the ride through the lane, the musings of the Abbot Ernestus, the talk of the bride and bridegroom on the terrace over the Rhine, the speech of Prince Henry from the Balcony at Genoa, and Elsie's answering chant—

> "The night is calm and cloudless,
> And still as still can be,
> And the stars come forth to listen
> To the music of the sea.
> They gather, and gather, and gather,
> Until they crowd the sky,
> And listen, in breathless silence,
> To the solemn litany.
> It begins in rocky caverns,
> As a voice that chants alone
> To the pedals of the organ
> In monotonous undertone;
> And anon from shelving beaches,
> And shallow sands beyond,
> In snow-white robes uprising
> The ghostly choirs respond.
> And sadly and unceasing
> The mournful voice sings on,
> And the snow-white choirs still answer,
> Christe, Eleison!"

Perhaps, however, the work on which Longfellow's fame most securely rests is *Hiawatha*. This poem, in which a series of Idylls are strung together, on the thread of an idea common to Indian and Scandinavian legend, has been called an American *Odyssey*, an aboriginal *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, the *Ancient Mariner* of Transatlantic verse—com-

parisons nearly as dangerous as that between Bryant and Wordsworth, too courageously instituted by injudicious friends. The merit of *Hiawatha* is rather that it is *sui generis*, a transparent allegory, a sheaf of ballads, a child's story book, and a poem full of morning breezes. Though apparently written *currente calamo*, it really yields to none of the author's works in artistic finish. The verse is indeed somewhat monotonous, and painfully open to parody; but, within the limits of the volume, it preserves, with its few notes, the freshness of a linnet's song. It has been said that the popular imagination plagiarises itself in every country: the common basis of national legend is here seen to stretch beyond the circle of the Aryan races. *Hiawatha* is, like Triptolemus or Bramah, the civiliser. His friends Kwasind and Chibiabos are respectively Hercules the monster-slayer and Apollo the singer, while some of the attributes of Hermes are divided between Iagoo and Paupakewis. But these Indian demi-gods come into closer contact with simpler forms of existence: their counsellors are beavers and sturgeons, their oracles streams and birds. Into the spirit of this primitive life Longfellow has thrown himself as completely as he has into that of Norse Paganism in the *Challenge of Thor*. He is at home among the pine groves and the prairies, and the great lakes of the Northland, and

> "All the many sounds of nature,
> Borrow sweetness from his singing."

Hiawatha speaks of them with the familiarity of an inhabitant: there is no trace of the grandiose style of the tourist, and here and there, notably in the capture of Kagahgee the king of the ravens, there is a touch of genuine humour. In the best episodes of the volume—as the account of the hero's infancy, of his early associates, of his sailing forth on his mission of peace and good works, of the wooing and the death of Minnehaha, of the son of the evening star,

of the weird ghosts and the ghastly famine,—the parable of human life under a guise of half-savage manners, life with its three great stages of birth and love and decay, is told in a narrative of childlike tenderness and masculine grasp, lit by an imagination like an Aurora Borealis. A New York critic ridicules the European view that *Hiawatha* is an American poem: it belongs, he insists, to the wigwam and not to the Exchange. It is true that the feverish ardour of Wall Street has no place in its pages; but in celebrating Red Indian life, it inevitably discloses some of the features of the people who have met and clashed with that life. Mr. Hepworth Dixon, in one of those observant works which have suffered partly from the prejudice of the public, partly from the haste and questionable tact of the writer, justly dwells on the extent to which the New Zealand myth about the strength of the dead man passing into his conqueror applies to the pioneers of the West. *Hiawatha* sings the dirge of a nearly vanished race in strains that recall the Briton legends on the death of Arthur; but it has also a prophetic side—from the meeting point of two worlds of men, it looks before as well as after—

> "I beheld, too, in that vision,
> All the secrets of the future,
> Of the distant days that shall be.
> I beheld the westward marches
> Of the unknown crowded nations.
> All the land was full of people,
> Restless, struggling, toiling, striving,
> Speaking many tongues, yet feeling
> But one heart beat in their bosoms.
> In the woodlands rang their axes,
> Smoked their towns in all the valleys;
> Over all the lakes and rivers,
> Rushed their great canoes of thunder."

Thackeray, who has a cynical pleasure in making even his heroes seem absurd, has represented the noblest of them, Colonel Newcome, in utter perplexity over the critical rever-

sions of judgment of his time. "He heard opinions that amazed and bewildered him. He heard that Byron was no great poet, though a very clever man. He heard that there had been a wicked persecution against Mr. Pope's memory and fame . . . that his favourite Dr. Johnson . . . did not write English, etc. etc. All these opinions were openly uttered over his claret, as he and Mr. Binnie sat wondering at the speakers, who were knocking the gods of their youth about their ears." In this matter, I confess to an old-fashioned sympathy with the Colonel. Byron and Pope and the dynasty of the old gods will be reinstated, and the half-scornful, half-clamorous conspiracy against Longfellow will ultimately fail. Miss Margaret Fuller, in *The Dial*, leads the attack by a notice, in which she openly professes her dislike of Aristides: she has been followed, on both sides of the Atlantic, by the new school of critics, who have determined that nothing is to be accepted as poetry which is not either unintelligible or disgusting. These very clever people do not want a guide to direct, or an artist to charm, or a musician to lull them to repose amid

"The tumult of the time disconsolate."

They seek a phenomenon to stare at, an enigma to unravel, an ugly subject to dissect, a double lock to pick, something on which to show their own skill as intellectual conjurors or mental funambulists. Such critics, of various capacity, can never estimate Longfellow at all. He has not indeed intensity enough to take rank with the *Dii Majores*, but his writings are deeper than they seem; because every sentence he has penned is as clear as crystal and as pure as snow. There are seasons in this over-wrought, over-educated, over-examined age, when we prefer his company to that of the "grand old masters," when we turn from Dante and Milton, even from Keats and Tennyson, to "songs that have power to quiet the restless pulse of care"—songs, like this,

which, however haughtily superfine analysts may scout its "commonplace," are likely to appeal to human hearts, when Miss Fuller's rhapsodies on Beethoven and Plotinus shall have passed like a purple smoke away—

"She dwells by great Kenhawa's side,
In valleys green and cool;
And all her hope and all her pride
Are in the village school.

"Her soul, like the transparent air
That robes the hills above,
Though not of earth, encircles there
All things with arms of love.

"And thus she walks among her girls,
With praise and mild rebukes;
Subduing e'en rude village churls,
By her angelic looks.

"She reads to them at eventide
Of One who came to save;
To cast the captive's chains aside,
And liberate the slave.

"And oft the blessed time foretells,
When all men shall be free;
And musical as silver bells
Their falling chains shall be.

"And following her beloved Lord
In decent poverty,
She makes her life one sweet record
And deed of charity.

"For she was rich, and gave up all
To break the iron bands
Of those who waited in her hall,
And laboured in her lands.

"Long since beyond the Southern Sea,
Their outbound sails have sped;
While she, in meek humility,
Now earns her daily bread.

"It is their prayers, which never cease,
That clothes her with such grace;
Their blessing is the light of peace,
That shines upon her face."

With one exception the best work of the other Western poets of note is vigorous, fresh, and rude: they think and feel better than they speak: they are eager, impatient, loud, apt to confound poetry with rhetoric, impetuosity with power; but they have contributed something distinctly new to the literature of the world. This most applies to the writer who, in the estimate of several claiming to direct modern criticism, is the grandest single product of America.

The "Saturday Club" of Boston is one of the choicest of social circles. There were wont to meet the leading metaphysicians, humorists, poets, and lecturers of Harvard and its neighbourhood—Dr. Howe, the recreator of Laura Bridgman; Mr. Fields, the New England Murray; Ticknor, the critic of *The Cid;* Hillard, the editor of Landor's *Hellenics;* Lowell, fresh from his *Commemoration Ode;* Bowen, dreaming over Kant; Holmes, brightest of talkers and kindliest of wits; Emerson, giving serene utterance to some careful paradox; and, at the head of the table, diffusing over it a mellow sunshine, the author of *Hiawatha.* We can imagine the door flung open wide, and bursting on this august and polished company a strange figure, tall, stalwart, and disorderly, a "specimen of native raw material," a cross between John the Baptist and a Cherokee Indian. We fancy him striding to the front, throwing down a bundle of manuscripts, and shouting—"The kingdom of heaven is here: I am America: I am Europe: I am Asia: I am Africa and the Polynesian Islands: I am the North Pole, and the South Pole, and the Equator: I am the Mississippi: I am Manhattan: I am the past and the future, there is no difference: I am female and male and gymastical: I am Humanity: I am a Libertad: I sound my barbaric yaup over the roofs of the world,—

'Did you ask dulcet rhymes from me,
Did you find what I sang erewhile so hard to follow, to understand?
Why, I was not singing, erewhile, for you to follow, nor am I now.

What to such as you anyhow such a poet as I, therefore leave my work
And go lull yourself with what you can understand ;
For I lull nobody, and you will never understand me :'—

but the daintiest of Oxford have written odes to me, and the most cynical of Cambridge. My English Editor, with all his purification of my pages—where there is nothing pure or impure, but all is immense—my Editor admits that I am 'oceanic and colossal,' 'beyond compare the greatest of American poets . . . one of the greatest now living in any part of the world.' You, what are you? Your verse is 'either the poetry of an elegantly weak sentimentalism, or at bottom nothing but maudlin puerilities, or more or less musical verbiage, arising out of a life of enervation, or else that class of plays, etc., of which the foundation is feudalism, with its ideas of lords and ladies, its imported gentility, and the manners of European high life below stairs in every line and verse.'

"But listen to one of my *Drum Taps*—

'Beat ! beat ! drums !—Blow ! bugles ! blow !
Through the windows—through doors—burst like a ruthless force,
Into the solemn church, and scatter the congregation ;
Into the school where the scholar is studying ;
Leave not the bridegroom quiet—no happiness must he have now with his bride ;
Nor the peaceful farmer any peace, ploughing his field or gathering his grain ;
So fierce you whirr and pound, you drums—so shrill you bugles blow.
. . . . . .
Beat ! beat ! drums !—Blow ! bugles ! blow !
Make no parley—stop for no expostulation ;
Mind not the timid—mind not the weeper or prayer ;
Mind not the old man beseeching the young man ;
Let not the child's voice be heard, nor the mother's entreaties ;
Make even the trestles to shake the dead, where they lie awaiting the hearses,
So strong you thump, O terrible drums—so loud you bugles blow !'

"Now, like Nebuchadnezzar, you shall digest a *Leaf of Grass*—

'What do you see, Walt Whitman?
Who are they you salute, and that one after another salute you?
I see a great round wonder rolling through the air;
I see diminute farms, hamlets, ruins, grave-yards, jails, factories, palaces, hovels, huts of barbarians, tents of nomads, upon the surface;
I see the shaded part on one side, where the sleepers are sleeping—and the sunlit part on the other side,
I see the curious silent change of the light and shade,
I see distant lands, as real and near to the inhabitants of them as my land is to me.

I see plenteous waters;
I see mountain-peaks—I see the sierras of Andes and Alleghanies, where they range;
I see plainly the Himalayas, Chian Shahs, Altays, Ghauts;
I see the giant pinnacles of Elburz, Kazbec, Bazardjusi;
I see the Rocky Mountains, and the Peak of Winds;
I see the Styrian Alps, and the Karnac Alps;

. . . . . .

I see the superior oceans and the inferior ones—the Atlantic and Pacific, the sea of Mexico, the Brazilian sea, and the sea of Peru,
The Japan waters, those of Hindostan, the China Sea, and the Gulf of Guinea,
The spread of the Baltic, Caspian, Bothnia, the British shores, and the Bay of Biscay,
The clear-sunned Mediterranean, and from one to another of its islands,
The inland fresh-tasted seas of North America,
The White Sea, and the sea around Greenland.

I behold the mariners of the world;
Some are in storms—some in the night, with the watch on the look-out;
Some drifting helplessly—some with contagious diseases.'"

These passages, far from being perversely selected, are among the gems chosen by the poet's most enthusiastic admirer; nor do I deny that the first has merit. The second is a short section from a long diorama of names, accumulated in the same fashion.

"I saw the vision of the world and all the wonder that should be"

is the text and pith of the whole, amplified, by a simple process, from Lord Salisbury's large maps and a copious gazetteer,

into two pages of hearing and thirteen pages of seeing: smelling, tasting, and touching are in this instance fortunately omitted; but it is by no means always so. Walt Whitman is undoubtedly a writer of great force, but he is ruined as an artist by his contempt for art—an impeachment nowise weakened by the fact that, in edition after edition, he has added and altered many times, without bettering the original scrawl. He has a teeming brain on a big body, and he tosses everything that the one or the other engenders into his powerful or monstrous book. The result is a chaos of impressions, thoughts, or feelings thrown together without rhyme, which matters little; without metre, which matters more; and often without reason, which matters much. There is no principle of prosody on which he can be harmoniously read; for, when we are rarely rejoicing in the run of some discernible rhythm, a block laid across the line throws us off the rails. His words sometimes belong to no language, or they are used in a contorted sense, which is the *ne plus ultra* of a pedantry never before found in conjunction with so much barbarism. A fervid admirer admits that he is a Democratic formalist; and, protesting against the objections taken to his views of life, confesses that "never before was high poetry so puddled and adulterated with mere doctrine in its crudest form. Never was there less assimilation of the lower dogmatic with the higher prophetic element . . . it is one thing to sing the song of all trades, and quite another to tumble down together the names of all possible crafts and implements in one unsorted heap; to sing the song of all countries is not simply to fling out on the page at random, in one howling mass, the titles of all divisions of the earth, and so leave them." We go further than this writer—"*οὐ γὰρ πρό γε τῆς ἀληθείας τιμητέος ἀνήρ*"—in reprobating this reckless manner. If Shakespeare, Keats, and Goethe are poets, Whitman is not. He *is*, in this respect, "Athanasius contra mundum." Nor, despite

a wholesome dread of merely conventional morals, can we wholly pardon the taste of his presentation of *Natura naturans* in her most unabashed forms, or acquiesce in his audacious denial of all that civilisation has done to raise man above the savage or the chimpanzee. No considerable writer has been more devoid of the remotest sense of humour; by consequence, no one else who has written even tolerably has perpetrated such utter absurdities. On the other hand, Whitman exhibits some genius in his perception of natural beauty, the charm of which in the *Leaves of Grass* underlies a cartload of crude Pantheism and naked Animalism, and is especially conspicuous in his descriptions of the sea. The battle-piece of sections 35-36, *Would you hear of an old-time sea-fight*, has the vigour of Tennyson's *Revenge;* but how inferior the form! His moral excellences are his absolutely unaffected democratic philanthropy; a confidence, like Shelley's, in the world's great age beginning anew—like that of Burns, in all the dwellers on its surface being brothers at last; and his intense pathetic sympathy with his fellow-workers under every form of struggle, sickness, or sorrow. Rough, even insolent, as the man at times appears, it should not be forgotten that, during the terrible war, he went about the most dangerous fields, ministering with gentle hands to the wounded and the dying. Half the *Drum Taps* are clarions; the rest dirges or idylls, which only fall short of masterpieces because their passionate regrets are expressed in stammering speech. Few nobler laments have been written in America than *Lincoln's Burial Hymn*, the closing strophe of which gathers up the preceding images in a burst of irregular melody.

"I cease for my song for thee;
From my gaze on thee in the west, fronting the west, communing with thee,
O comrade lustrous, with silver face in the night,
Yet each I keep, and all, retrievements out of the night;

The song, the wondrous chant of the gray-brown bird,
And the tallying chant, the echo raised in my soul,
With the lustrous and drooping star, with the countenance full of woe,
With the lilac tall and its blossoms of mastering odour;
With the holders holding my hand, nearing the call of the bird,
Comrades mine, and I in the midst, and their memory ever I keep—
for the dead I loved so well,
For the sweetest, wisest soul of all my days and lands—and this for
his dear sake,
Lilac and star and bird, twined with the chant of my soul,
There in the fragrant pines, and the cedars dusk and dim."

The following shorter piece on the same subject is equally worthy of the author's highest mood:—

"O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done;
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won;
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring:
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead!

"O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills;
For you bouquets and ribbon wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding;
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!
This arm beneath your head;
It is some dream that on the deck
You've fallen cold and dead.

"My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won.
Exult, O shores, and ring, O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead."

Nor inferior is his expression of a more general loss, that of foe as of friend, of the same race, on the same field—

"RECONCILIATION.

"Word over all, beautiful as the sky!
Beautiful that war, and all its deeds of carnage, must in time be utterly lost;
That the hands of the sisters Death and Night, incessantly, softly, wash again, and ever again this soiled world;
For my enemy is dead—a man divine as myself is dead;
I look where he lies, white-faced and still, in the coffin—I draw near;
I bend down, and touch lightly with my lips the white face in the coffin."

Still more pathetic is the letter from the dying "Pete" to his mother, and that entitled *Vigil on the Fields*. But even in Whitman's best work there is constantly some provoking rudeness that jars, as if a piece of glass had got into our bread: we must take him as he is, a benevolent but unteachable egotist, who has been told that he writes like the Hebrew prophets till he has come to believe it, and regards any other criticism as profanity. A better comparison is that instituted between him and Blake; but Blake, with all his occasional lawlessness, had a tenfold stock of ideas, abounding wealth of effective words, a lyric spring that has been likened to Shelley's, and a plastic power, when he chose to exercise it, of welding together thoughts and words into rich unities of form and colour. The great English poet who has compared them overestimates both, because he shares, and therefore fails sufficiently to condemn, the diffuseness which marks the rhapsodies of both. He has called attention to their common points in the following sentences:—

"The great American is not a more passionate preacher of sexual or political freedom than the English artist. To each the imperishable form of a Universal Republic is equally requisite. To each all sides and shapes of life are alike acceptable. From the ground of either workman nothing is excluded that is not exclusive. The words of either strike deep, and run wide, and soar high. They are both full of faith and passion: both recall the fragments vouchsafed to us of the philosophy of the East. The casual audacities of expression are well-nigh identical. The divine devotion which makes men martyrs is palpable in each. . . . In details their work constantly coincides. A

sound as of a sweeping wind, a prospect as over dawning continents at the fiery instant of a sudden sunrise; a splendour now of stars and now of storms; a strength and security of touch in small sweet sketches of colour and outline—these are qualities common to the work of either."

The critic runs on in a similar strain, with an eloquence surpassing that of his authors, and a passion of speech that hurries off his judgment; but *valeat pro tanto.* It should at least be remembered that Blake was a wonderful, if sometimes fantastic, *artist;* and that where the writers compared coincide, as in the prophetic books, Blake has a more powerful stroke. There is nothing in Whitman that reaches near the *Song of Liberty,* inspired by the downfall of the Bastile, and published towards the close of the *Heaven and Hell.* The one is a prodigious genius, marred by almost insane violence: the other a writer of almost insane violence, occasionally redeemed by a touch of genius.

Smoother, though less original, are the verses of Cincinnatus, better known by his pseudonym of Joaquin Miller, who has celebrated his Californian cañons, or the "seas of wild lands" that stretch beyond the Missouri, in a series of stirring narratives known as the *Songs of the Sierras.* His real experience of the life he represents is evident from the genuinely fresh flavour of his work; from the occasional ruggedness of his lines, which are those of a pioneer rather than a trained man of letters. His rhymes, his rhythms, and his grammar are often defective, and his imagery incongruous; as when he rhymes "wassail" with "tale," uses "fire" as a word of two syllables, leaps from iambic to trochaic metre, or talks of "the milk-white moon." He is in English literature an adventurer, and somewhat of a pirate. You cannot read the description of the flood in the *Arizonian* without comparing it with Miss Ingelow's *High Tide in Lincolnshire;* nor *Kit Carson's Ride* without remembering *How they brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix:* while his de-

scriptions of animate beauty and denunciations of creeds and priests, both in manner and matter, recall Mr. Swinburne. In the sometimes pathetic *Arizonian*, a gold-digger rejects the love of a dark-eyed Mexican, in fidelity to a young blonde he has left in old England, with a pledge to wait till he has made his fortune. The fiercely passionate Indian girl allows herself to be swept away in a storm of wind and rain, but haunts him, ever after, in the shape of a mystical "brown winged moth." He comes home and finds, as he thinks, his promised bride waiting for him, after twenty-one years, still wonderfully young, with "the hair of gold that he vexed of old," but unconscious of her truant.

> "She does not know me, her long lost lover,
> For my beard's so long and my skin's so brown,
> That I well might pass myself off for another.
> So I lifted my voice and cried aloud—
> 'Annette, my darling! Annette Macleod!'
> She started, she stopped, she turned, amazed;
> She stood all wonder with her eyes wild-wide,
> Then turned in terror down the dusk wayside,
> And cried as she fled, 'The man is crazed,
> And calls the maiden name of my mother.'"

Our chief regrets are for the "brown moth." The hero has read *Locksley Hall* and keeps his purpose better.

> "From a scene that saddens, from a ghost that wearies,
> From a white isle set in a wall of seas,
> From the kine and clover and all of these,
> I shall set my face for the fierce Sierras;
> I shall make me mates on the stormy border;
> I shall beard the grizzly, shall battle again,
> And from mad disorder shall build me order
> And a wild repose for a weary brain."

There is much sameness in Miller's work. He recites, in various forms, the tale of the "White Rose and Red," and he always enlists our sympathy with the latter. "Some savage woman," with a river of hair and heart of gold,

true as steel and "tawny red, like wine," is his perpetual heroine; for

> "All the North-land hath not one
> So warm of soul as sun maids are."

In *Walker in Nicaragua* he propounds the Anacreontic moral—

> "Love while 'tis day, night cometh soon,
> Wherein no man or maiden may."

But his lay figures, whom we cannot help regarding as fragmentary representatives of real life, are never permitted, like Byron's "Torquil" and "Neuha" in their coral cave, to carry out this maxim in peace. His stories are all of them painful tragedies. The note that underlies his occasionally buoyant verse is again the dirge of Bryant, or of *Hiawatha*, but more mournful; the author seems to take no glory in the half-civilisation that is superseding his familiar friends, the children of nature. *The Tale of the Tall Alcade* is (if we allow for the influence of a manifest study of *Mazeppa*, and *The Prisoner of Chillon*) the most striking of the series. The description of the old judge, with the terrible story buried in his heart—

> "Half defiant, half forlorn,
> Yearning for sympathy
> Through the long years,
> Spurning the secrecy
> Burning for tears"—

is almost worthy of Hood; and the touches of nature painting, as of the pines, after the massacre—

> "Like long slim fingers of a hand
> That sadly pointed to the dead"—

are both real and imaginative.

The author is less successful when he leaves the Sierras; but the feeling, at least, of the verse, suggested by the tomb of

Byron, to which he bore from San Francisco a votive wreath, is wise—

> "In men whom men condemn as ill
> I find so much of goodness still;
> In men whom men pronounce divine
> I find so much of sin and blot—
> I hesitate to draw the line
> Between the two, where God has not."

A few words in conclusion must suffice for the familiar favourite whom Lowell, in the *Fable for Critics*, thus wittily introduces:—

> "Here comes Poe with his *Raven*, like *Barnaby Rudge*,
> Three-fifths of him genius and two-fifths sheer fudge."

This is true, but we must not omit to add that Poe's genius, at its culminating point, threatens to transcend that of any of his compeers. This wonderful writer is a phenomenon *per se;* he seems to have belonged to a sphere in which certain elements of ordinary human nature are omitted, and others are developed to an unparalled intensity. His excellences as a poet are narrow, his virtues as a man still more so. He has no humour, no general sympathies, no dramatic power (for his *Politian* is the stupidest fragment of a play that survives), and hardly any self-control. The amiable and ingenious defence of his admirable editor, Mr. Ingram, shows that Poe was ill used and maligned by Mr. Griswold, that he could love and enlist affection, that he had reason to complain of being ousted by his inferiors, and that he often set before himself noble ideals; but we must confess that he was often "sad, and mad, and bad," and gloried in his madness and his badness. Let us find, in the half insanity of a diseased organism, the source and palliation of his errors of life and frequent fractious jealousy. Setting these aside, we are left to admire the flashes of the fancy and imagination with which his best work is radiant. His precocity was almost as

remarkable as Chatterton's, of whose career he often reminds us. A fine critic—the late Mr. James Hannay—has said of a short poem to a lady, written, we are told, at the age of fifteen, that it is, like Horace's Ode to Pyrrha, "merum nectar." If the date is correct, the classic finish of these lines can only be called miraculous.

"Helen, thy beauty is to me
Like those Nicæan barks of yore,
That gently, o'er a perfumed sea,
The weary, wayworn wanderer bore
To his own native shore.

"On desperate seas long wont to roam,
Thy hyacinth hair, thy classic face,
Thy Naiad airs have brought me home
To the glory that was Greece,
To the grandeur that was Rome.

"Lo! in yon brilliant window niche,
How, statue-like, I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand!
Ah, Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!"

The familiar *Raven* is, at the worst—*i.e.* by his own account—a marvellous piece of mechanism; *The Bells* a triumph of jingle. In the author's best lyrics, the fervour of his sympathy for himself makes artistic recompense for his general lack of sympathy for others. The lines to the *Colosseum*, *The City in the Sea*, *Eulalie*, *Lenore*, *To Annie*, have a fascination which we can neither explain nor resist; and even the semi-delirious horrors of *The Conqueror Worm* and *Ulalume*, with its nonsensical "Astarte's bediamonded crescent, distinct with its duplicate horn," are bewitched by the music of the spheres. In *Annabel Lee*[1] his pathos is

[1] It were unjust to the author to omit this masterpiece of music and tenderness from any collection of American verse; but we must leave room for extracts less familiar.

most profound, and his passion at the whitest heat; but the love he immortalises might be shared by "the winged seraphs of heaven." Nothing is more remarkable than the purity which pervades all this author's verses: they are set in serene skies, where no breath of his disordered life dares to ascend. They are like nuns in the convent of a riotous city. Poe lived in two worlds: the one was made desolate and miserable by his early orphanhood, his reckless youth, poverty, drudgery, and the demons worse than those which beset and blasted his career; the other is the world of his inner mind, the world of memories coming from afar.

"In the greenest of our valleys
By good angels tenanted,
Once a fair and stately palace,
Radiant palace, reared its head.
In the monarch Thought's dominion
It stood there.

"Never seraph spread a pinion
Over fabric half so fair.
Banners yellow, glorious, golden,
On its roof did float and flow.
This, all this, was in the olden
Time, long ago."

CHAPTER VII.

POLITICAL AND MINOR POETS—LOWELL, WHITTIER, HOLMES, ETC.

MR. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL introduces one of the chapters of his pleasant volume of *Fireside Travels* with these remarks: "The first sight of a shore so historical as that of Europe gives an American a strange thrill. What we always feel the artistic want of at home is background. It is all idle to say that we are Englishmen, and that English history is ours too. It is precisely in this that we are not Englishmen, as we only possess their history through our minds, and not by lifelong association with a spot and an idea that we call England." The growth of a history on their own soil is, in the minds of most Americans, a requisite to the development of national art. Memories of the Revolution war have suggested some stirring verses; as, "Paul Revere's Ride" in the *Wayside Inn;* several of Hawthorne's prose-poems; and Winthrop's *Edwin Brothertoft;* but the most effective national works of recent date owe their generative impulse to the political movements of the last quarter of a century. The assertion of Henri Beyle (Stendthal) that Politics are like a stone tied round the neck of Literature, and Goethe's warning to the young Germans, who were reproaching him with a lack of patriotic fervour, "Remember politics are not poetry," must be accepted with a reservation. As a rule, the wider the grasp of the poet, the further is he removed from the partisan. In Shakespeare, as

in Chaucer, this comprehensiveness is so extreme that he includes in his view of life (like that of a remote star with an infinitesimal parallax) only the common points, and excludes from it the differences of the two great systems of faith, which in his youth were contending, and are still contending, for the dominion of Christendom. Dante and Milton, with a narrow range, take more definite sides; but their highest poetry transcends the strife of Guelph and Ghibelline, of Puritan and Cavalier. On the other hand, poetry of a secondary, though still of a high, order may be referred to the suggestions of contemporary history, *i.e.* to politics. Ballads, not legendary or purely domestic, have often a political face; and this is true of the songs which, like the *Marseillaise*, help to fight the battles, or, according to Fletcher of Saltoun, make the laws of a nation. The stalks of asphodel which move to and fro the Gygonian Rock grow under its shadow. Even if we admit that the heroic thought which inspires heroic deeds comes from a loftier source, the shrewd thought that condemns or ridicules degenerate deeds is an offshoot of local or temporary circumstances. Satire not merely personal is, almost always, more or less political. The poetry of Sophocles seems to confirm Goethe's dictum; that of Aristophanes disproves it. *Paradise Lost* is comparatively impartial, but *Hudibras* would be naught without the animus of its polemic.

The *Biglow Papers*, a series of metrical pamphlets born of the great social and political struggle, to the phases of which we have referred, are among the most original contributions to American literature. Previous to the publication of this work, Mr. JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL was already well known, on both sides of the Atlantic, as the author of an extensive volume of miscellaneous verses, in various measures and themes, in several of which the zeal of the politician runs alongside of the fervour of the poet. Generally speaking, his

earlier efforts are more impetuous than powerful, and they conspicuously illustrate the artistic defects often attributed to his countrymen, as well as some of their peculiar and characteristic merits. Buoyant and vigorous, but bearing on every page the mark of haste, they display more fancy than imagination. Lowell says of Bryant (punning on the coldness of his manner) that "he dwells by himself in supreme *ice-olation:*" the remark is made natural by the fact that his own genius everywhere appears in opposition to Bryant's. Far from shrinking into solitary places, he loves great cities and their cries, and sets them to rhyme with hearty goodwill. When he goes into the country, it is to have his blood sent faster through his veins by the spring morning, and not to dream among autumn woods. We may read the following, one of the best of his descriptions, as a sufficient contrast to *Thanatopsis:*—

"And what is so rare as a day in June?
Then if ever come perfect days;
Then Heaven tries the Earth if it be in tune,
And over it softly her warm ear lays.
Whether we look, or whether we listen,
We hear life murmur or see it glisten:
Every clod feels a stir of might,
An instinct within that reaches and towers,
And, grasping blindly above it for light,
Climbs to a soul in grass and flowers."

Mr. Lowell, a Yankee to the backbone, is intolerant of English criticism; but can anything be more perverse, after the complete success of the last couplet, than to follow it up with this expansion in bad rhythm and bad rhyme?—

"The flush of life may well be seen; (!)
Thrilling back over hills and *valleys*
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its *chalice;*
And there's never a leaf or a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's *palace.*"

If we turn the page, in the same *Vision of Sir Launfal,*

to the picture of the grim old castle, which "summer besieges on every side," or read *Allegra*, or *The Fountain*, or the *Indian Summer Reverie*, we find, pervading them all, the same jubilant energy or flush of life, and the same carelessness. The passage from which we have quoted runs on "leaping and flashing," through a shoal of phantasies; and repeats itself in substance, a score of times, before coming to a period. Mr. Lowell's earlier style is apt to be both verbose and tautological—faults only half redeemed by its fluency and richness. He writes in utter disregard of Pope's "greatest art," and, unchecked by any reverences, contemns "the dead blaspheming Past," "Bibliolatry," and the "dotard Orient," after the fashion in which Dr. Mackay, Chartist poetaster and later *Times* correspondent,[1] was used to deal with "old opinions, rags, and tatters." The imagery in those poems, drawn direct from nature, is generally correct and suggestive, showing a keen eye and a fine sense of analogies: that drawn from history is less appropriate. Few Americans know how to use the classics with due reticence; Mr. Lowell constantly abuses them. His pages are perpetually pestered with schoolboy commonplaces; as Phidian Joves, Syracusan tyrants, Dodona groves, Olympus, Ganymede, Tyrtæan harps, rattling shields at Marathon; and confused by abstractions, as The Actual, The Idea, The Age, Humanity, etc.—abstractions more bombastic than metaphysical. Few of his ballads are wanting in fine lines; but most of them are spoilt by incongruities. The semi-political and social verses are, in substance, manly exhortations: we read them, in a sympathetic mood, with a glow of enthusiasm; but their fire never reaches a white heat, and, on revisal, it seems to be merely smouldering. The *Ode to Freedom*, the verses on the *Capture of Fugitive Slaves*, and those on the *Present Crisis* (bearing the date 1845, and presumably referring to the annexation of

[1] *i.e.* during the war, when he upheld the cause of the slaveholders.

Texas), are thick-set with stirring watchwords: few are more capable of being recited with effect on platforms, but they will not bear analysis. Mr. Lowell censures, with extreme severity, a mixed metaphor in Dean Merivale's *History*. What is a critic to say of the following?—

"New occasions teach new duties; Time makes ancient good uncouth.
They must upward still and onward, who would keep abreast of truth.
Lo, before us, gleam *her camp-fires;* we ourselves must pilgrims be—
Launch our *Mayflower*, and steer boldly through the desperate *winter sea*,
Nor attempt the Future's portal with the Past's *blood-rusted key*."

"We are glad, since we have so much in the same kind to answer for, that this bit of horticultural rhetoric is from beyond sea." The *Ode to France*, which, by its name, provokes a terrible comparison, abounds in worse examples.

Mr. Lowell's early volume is by no means the product of a poetaster; but his Odes are, almost without exception, calculated to encourage poetasters. His most famous performance in this direction, the *Ode recited at the Harvard Commemoration, July* 21, 1865, has been generally exalted, on both sides of the Atlantic, as the author's masterpiece. It does not seem to me, save in a few passages, to be even in the second rank of his works. In this laborious and often animated composition, platitudes lie side by side with violences, and attempts at strong writing too often result in cacophony; while the clear notes of its exultant patriotism are marred by a continual snarling over the sea.

"Who now shall sneer?[1]
. . . . . .
That is best blood that hath most iron in't
. . . . . .

[1] Few were inclined to "sneer," though many to regret. No victory ever "tingled the ears" of some of us with such exultation as that of Gettysburg, unless it were that of Sedan: but of late years Americans have proved sometimes ungracious even to their friends on this side of the water; and one but dares to doubt the thinness of the blood of Cœur de Lion.

Tell us not of Plantagenets,
Hapsburgs, and Guelphs, whose thin bloods crawl
Down from some victor in a Border brawl!
. . . . . .
Shout victory, tingling Europe's sullen ears
With vain resentments and more vain regrets."

The frequent pedantry of this performance is illustrated by the close of the second strophe, in which we have twenty-seven lines without a single period.

"But rather for that stern device,
The sponsors chose, that round thy cradle stood
In the dim unventured wood,
The VERITAS that lurks beneath
The letter's unprolific sheath."

In the next section we have one of the few exceptional passages to which I have referred.

III.

. . . . . .
. . . . . .

"Those love her best who to themselves are true,
And what they dare to dream of dare to do;
They followed her and found her
Where all may hope to find;
Not in the ashes of the burnt-out mind,
But beautiful, with danger's sweetness round her;
Where faith, made whole with deed,
Breathes its awakening breath
Into the lifeless creed.
They saw her plumed and mailed,
With sweet, stern face unveiled,
And all-repaying eyes look proud on them in death."

But the fourth again subsides into prose, in the course of which we are informed that

"Loves, hates, ambitions, and immortal fires,
Are tossed pell-mell together in the grave;"

later we are assured that "the live coal behind the thought, whether from Baäl's stone obscene, or from the shrine serene

of God's pure altar brought, bursts up in flame"; and perplexed by the announcement that

> "Some innative weakness there must be
> In him who condescends to victory."

However we may condone the exaggeration, we can scarce forgive the rhyme declaring President Lincoln to have been a

> "Kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing *man*,
> New birth of our new soil, the first *American*."

The eighth and ninth strophes are rich in commonplaces about the "musing eye," the mighty ones of old sweeping by, disvoiced, naught abiding in the world but change, etc.: but we must be satisfied to make good the charge of cacophony by the example of a few lines :—

> "We sit here in the Promised Land
> That flows with Freedom's honey and milk;
> But 'twas they won it sword in hand,
> Making the nettle danger soft for us as silk.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "The soul resents
> Such short-lived service, as if blind events
> Ruled without her, or earth could so endure.
> She claims a more divine investiture.
>
> "They come transfigured back,
> Secure from change in their high-hearted ways,
> Beautiful evermore, and with the rays
> Of morn on their white shields of expectation!"

A passage toward the end is impressive, but with an obvious echo of Tennyson's *Guinevere*—

> "Bow down, dear Land, for thou hast found release!
> Thy God, in these distempered days,
> Hath taught thee the sure wisdom of His ways,
> And through thine enemies hath wrought thy peace!
> Bow down in prayer and praise!
> No poorest in thy borders but may now
> Lift to the juster skies a man's enfranchised brow.
> O beautiful! my country! ours once more!
> Smoothing thy gold of war-dishevelled hair
> O'er such sweet brows as never other wore."
>
> . . . . . .

Despite such passages, the poem as a whole is a failure. Mr. Swinburne is hardly too severe when he calls it a "Thanksgiving Ode of wooden verse, sawn into unequal planks, and tagged incongruously with tuneless bells . . . modelled on the chaotic songs of ceremony, done to order on State occasions by our laureates of the Restoration and Revolution."

Several of the pieces in the same volume, as *Under the Willows*, the *Voyage to Vinland*, the *Wind Harp*, *Auf Wiedersehen*, are much more successful. Similarly, in the previous collection we admire *The Requiem*, *The Token*, *The Beggar Bard*, *The Growth of the Legend*, *Hebe*, *A Prayer*, *The Ghost Seer*, and *The Forlorn* (the last inspired by the beautiful charity of Hood), where the poet sets to music the hopes and fears common to North and South, Democratic and Republican. The verses to *Irene* overweigh all he had composed for platforms, previous to the appearance of his masterpiece.

"Hers is a spirit deep and crystal clear;
Calmly beneath her earnest face it lies,
Free without boldness, meek without a fear,
Quicker to look than speak its sympathies;
Far down into her large and patient eyes
I gaze (deep drinking of the infinite),
As, in the mid-watch of a clear still night,
I look into the fathomless blue skies:
So circled lives she with love's holy light,
That from the shade of self she walketh free.

. . . . . .

"Cloudless for ever is her brow serene,
Speaking calm hope and trust within her, whence
Welleth a noiseless spring of patience,
That keepeth all her life so fresh, so green,
And full of holiness, that every look,
The greatness of her woman's soul revealing,
Unto me bringeth blessing and a feeling
As when I read in God's own holy book."

There is much even about the author's earlier works—the

love of truth, the thirst for freedom, the hatred of meanness, the *perfervidum ingenium Scotorum* without their paralysing caution—"Staves from the burly old Mayflower lay," and "a smack of the pine woods," in which we "drones of the Old World" find invigorating refreshment, and which serve to countervail his prevailing diffuseness and occasional eccentricity.

Mr. Lowell dwells so frequently on defects similar to his own in some of his compeers that we must give him credit for being conscious of, and struggling against, them. The following, on a now obscure writer of Maine, has a wide applicability :—

> "Neal wants balance, he throws his mind always too far,
> And whisks out flocks of comets and never a star.
> He has so much muscle, and longs so to show it,
> That he strips himself naked to prove he's a poet."

These lines occur in the *Fable for Critics*—a long and witty series of criticisms in verse, descended, through Leigh Hunt's *Feast*, from Suckling's *Session of the Poets*—in which Lowell breaks ground on the field where he has since found his harvest. The intrinsic merit of this piece lies in its candour and the general accuracy of its estimates. The "whole tuneful herd" of American authors are reviewed with fair appreciation and good-natured banter ; but the catholicity and discernment of the author's taste are especially conspicuous in his lines on Emerson, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Cooper, Irving, Edgar Poe, and Judd. He overpraises Willis, and does scant justice to Bryant, but his recognition of the latter's relation to Wordsworth shows that his intense nationality has not blinded him to the superiority of the English classics.

The style of the *Fable for Critics* is rapid and sparkling; its "rhythmical trinkets" glitter like icicles in moonlight. It is "all armed with points, antitheses, and puns," which follow each other like sparks from a Leyden jar. In illustra-

tion of his manner of conjuring in verbal illusions, we may take, from the introduction to the Fable, Apollo's lament over Daphne. The poet speaks through the mouth of the disconsolate god :—

"My case is like Dido's, he sometimes remarked,
When I last saw my love, she was fairly embarked :
Let hunters from me take this saw when they need it—
You're not always sure of your game when you've treed it.
Just conceive such a change taking place in one's mistress !
What romance would be left ? Who can flatter or kiss trees ?
And, for mercy's sake, how could one keep up a dialogue
With a dull wooden thing that will live and will die a log ?
Not to say that the thought would for ever intrude
That you've less chance to win her the more she is wood.
Ah ! it went to my heart, and the memory still grieves,
To see those loved graces all taking their leaves ;
Those charms beyond speech so enchanting, but now
As they left me for ever, each making its bough !
If her tongue had a tang sometimes more than was right,
Her new bark is worse than ten times her old bite."

Or take this satire on a bad book :—

"This is the forty-fourth copy you've brought me ;
I've given them away, or at least I have tried,
But I've forty-two left standing all side by side,
(The man who accepted that one copy died)."

The following allusion to the brilliant talker and nebulous writer Alcott, is still more pointed :—

"While he talks he is great, but goes out like a taper
If you shut him up closely with pen, ink, and paper ;
Yet his fingers itch for them from morning till night,
And he thinks he does wrong if he don't always write ;
In this, as in all things, a lamb among men,
He goes to sure death when he goes to his pen."

But page on page of this sort of thing becomes tiresome; and, not unfrequently, as in the jests on a graveyard, even tasteless. Lowell has on most occasions "enough of wit," but seldom "as much again to govern it."

Mr. Lowell informs us that his view of the Mexican war

as a national crime, perpetrated in the interest of slavery, led to the publication in 1846, of the first of his series of *Biglow Papers*. This series closed in 1848. After an interval of thirteen years, the second began to appear in 1861: it concludes with an imaginary speech, addressed to the Republican March Meeting, of 1866. In reviewing those remarkable productions, in which, through the masks of three distinct types of New England character, the poet endeavours to enforce his own political and patriotic sentiments, we have little to add to his own defence of the dialect in which they are written. Bishop Percy, in dedicating his *Reliques* to the Countess of Northumberland, apologises for bringing "the rude songs of ancient minstrels before the notice of her who adorns courts by her presence, and diffuses elegance by her example"—an apology conceived in the spirit, and couched in the fine language, of the eighteenth century. But the success of Percy's experiment marked the beginning of a reaction in favour of simpler modes of thought and expression, which, in spite of the bad example of Johnson, and the great example of Gibbon, has ever since been gaining ground in England. The revived study of our old literature, the rise of a national philology, the influence of Burns and Wordsworth, have combined to direct attention to the primitive forms of our speech preserved in outlying districts. Our living scholars dwell on the part played by dialectical regeneration in arresting the corruptions of a language, and the advantages of reinforcing it from its living roots. What were once called vulgarisms have in many cases carried the day against "diction;" and our authors are willing to admit as true, and, with some reservations, to act upon the mottoes prefixed to the second series of the *Biglow Papers*—"Unsere Sprache ist auch eine Sprache," "Vim rebus aliquando ipsa verborum humilitas affert." The indispensable condition to the use of a country dialect is that it be natural to the writer:

it must be "unsere Sprache." There is as much affectation in the assumption of a *patois*, as in a starched or swollen style of speech: the Scotticisms of an Oxonian, besides being generally incorrect, are as incongruous as the classical drapery of the Ayrshire bard's letters to Clarinda. Mr. Lowell has taken pains to show that the peculiarities of the Yankee dialect are not indigenous, that the pronunciations and meanings given to old words now strange to Englishmen, and the use of words now unknown in England, were familiar to Spenser, Drayton, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Webster, and Middleton, even to Herrick, Herbert, Dryden, and Swift. This vindication of their parentage (supported by Dr. Marsh and other authorities in Philology) is successful as an answer to what Mr. Lowell calls "the European Mrs. Grundy:" we are more concerned to know that he has been happy in his use of the words and phrases in question. A man of culture and refinement, the chances were greatly in favour of his failure; but the permanent popularity of his work is a voucher for his success. He is not only at home in the rural dialect: it seems to fit his genius better than the English of his University. In some instances

> "The ploughman's whistle, or the trivial flute
> Finds more respect than great Apollo's lute,"

because the tune is of more consequence than the instrument; and our author is an admirable player on his satiric idyllic flute. The quasi-dramatic form which he has adopted is also fortunate, as it confines a too discursive fancy within limits. His *penchant* for classical illusion finds vent in a sort of self-satire, through the mouth of the worthy, though pedantic, Puritan minister, the Rev. Homer Wilbur. Hosea Biglow himself, the rough New England patriot, is ready, like Admiral Rodney, to "damn the Trojans and damn the Greeks;" while the letters of Mr. Sawin are excellent examples of one of the most effective forms of satire—that

in which contemptible qualities are stripped of their varnish by the sheer effrontery of the wearer.

The *Biglow Papers*, though written as pamphlets, are better matured and more condensed than Mr. Lowell's other works (for political fervour, as well as personal passion, intensifies): their style is more trenchant and original, and they are really humorous. Their humour is removed on the one side by its breadth from the epigrammatic wit of the *Dunciad*, on the other, from the humour of our great dramatists, by the obviousness of its ideas. Of the characters with which it plays, Birdofredum Sawin is a thorough grotesque (Hosea Biglow is almost wholly serious), and Parson Wilbur a mere sketch of a patriotic pedant. The book derives its popularity from the incisive force of the expression given to the sentiments shared by the author with a large section of his countrymen, and many of the lines most frequently quoted owe everything to their startling directness, as—

> "Ef you take a sword and dror it
> And go stick a feller thru,'
> Gov'ment aint to answer for it,
> God'll send the bill to you.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Ninepence a-day for killing folks,
> Comes kin' o' low for murder"—

or in the lines of the pious editor's creed, characteristically clenched with a pun—

> "I don't believe in principle,
> But, O, I du in interest"—

or in the honest candidate's declaratory letter, where the log-rolling of elections is ridiculed in the verse, "Ef you git me inside the White House," etc. In these instances, as in the satires on martial glory — a favourite theme with modern reformers—the humour consists in tearing the paint off dishonesty, and leaving it naked, to its own condemnation. It

is the same power that has given such wide celebrity to the famous thoughts of Mr. John P. Robinson; as in the verse about the Apostles, where the contrast between Christian profession and military practice is drawn with a disregard of conventionality, that delights some readers and horrifies others. The religion of Americans is more homespun than that of Englishmen; but it is neither less sincere nor less fervid, and the quaintness of their language in speaking of sacred things may be paralleled by passages from our elder divines, who lived at a time when men faced the facts of spiritual experience more boldly than we do, because they were more closely inwoven with their everyday life. Mr. Lowell speaks of the common sense of his hero being "vivified and heated by conscience." His own poetic powers are set on fire by moral indignation. He is a good hater, and his hatreds sharpen the edge of his most effective verses. There is a fine satiric scorn in the following, put into the mouth of Calhoun:—

"Freedom's keystone is slavery, that ther's no doubt on,
It's sutthin' thet's—wha'd ye call it?—divine,
And the slaves that we ollers make the most out on,
Air them north o' Mason and Dixon's line.
The mass ough' to labour, an' we lay on soffies,
Thet's the reason I want to spread Freedom's aree,
It puts all the cunnin'est on us in office,
And reelises our Maker's orig'nal idee,
Sez John C. Calhoun, sez he."

Such lampoons as these were the "*agentia verba Lycamben*" which, with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, and the speeches of Garrison, Phillips, and Sumner, helped to hasten the "irrepressible conflict" of the two contending forces in the western continent. Of those two forces Mr. Lowell had written in 1846—

"Ef I'd my way I hed ruther
We should go to work, an' part;
They take one way, we take t'other—
Guess it wouldn't break my heart."

Fifteen years afterwards he had changed his mind—or rather, events had changed it. The nation had grown greater, the adverse interests more imposing, and the passions on both sides more frantic. Her success in the affair of Texas made the South drunk as with new wine. Disdaining equality, she aspired to a permanent domination, and, after triumphing in the passage of the Fugitive Slave Bill, suffered her first defeat in Kansas. Then came the Dred Scot decision, the Boston anti-slavery riots, the raid of John Brown. The South hanged John Brown. "That," replied Emerson, on behalf of Massachusets, "that consecrates the gallows." Men in this temper must either part or fight, and the manner in which the South attempted to part made it necessary for them to fight. Armed in secret by the continuous treachery of five years, she began the attack on the United States in the same fashion in which she had begun the attack on Kansas—in the fashion of Brooks's attack on Mr. Sumner. The second series of the *Biglow Papers* is animated by the spirit of an uncompromising Unionist as well as that of an Abolitionist. Copperheads and Secessionists, as such, are lashed as mercilessly as the Slaveholders whom the mock-glorification of Southern society, put into the mouth of a mean political scamp, was certainly not calculated to conciliate. Mr. Sawin *loquitur*—having settled in "Old Virginny," and married a lady of the "fus' fem'ly" there, whose maiden name was Higgs—

> "Fact is, we air a different race, an' I for one don't see,
> Sech havin' ollers ben the case, how w' ever did agree;
> It's sunthin' thet you lab'rin' folks up North hed ough' to think on
> That Higgses can't demean themselves to rulin' by a Lincoln;
> Thet men (an' guv'nors tu) that hez sech Normal names ez Pickens,
> Accustomed to no kin' o' work, 'thout 'tis to givin' lickens,
> Can't measure votes with folks that git their living from their farms,
> And prob'ly think that Law's ez good as havin' coats o' arms."

Nevertheless, our hero feels some difficulty about the finan-

cial condition of his adopted country, and fears that "swappin' silver off for lead ain't the sure way to win."

> "An' fact it *does* look now ez though—but folks must live an' larn—
> We should git lead, an' more'n we want, out o' the Old Consarn:
> But when I see a man so wise an' honest ez Buchanan
> A-lettin us hev' all the forts an' all the arms an' cannon,
> Admittin' we wuz nat'lly right an' you waz nat'lly wrong,
> Coz you wuz lab'rin' folks and we wuz what they call bong-tong;
> An' coz there warn't no fight in ye more'n in a mashed potater,
> While two o' us can't skurcely meet but what we fight by natur;
> An' th'aint a bar-room here would pay for openin' on't a night
> Without it giv' the priverlege o' bein' shot at sight;
> Which proves we're Natur's noblemen, with whom it don't surprize
> The British aristox'y should feel bound to sympathize," etc.

Throughout the volume there is a relic of the spirit of the Ironsides, who "smote Agag hip and thigh," but the writer recognises the difficulty and delicacy as well as the magnitude of the task before his country. "That exe of ourn," says the ghost of an old Pilgrim Father who appears to Biglow in a dream,

> "Opened a gap that ain't bridged over yet.
> Slavery's your Charles, the Lord hez gin the exe;
> '*Our Charles*,' *sez I*, '*hez gut eight million necks*.'"

Lowell's satire has lost none of its former point: his patriotism glows with a deeper fervour. His songs rise out of the battlefield "like rockets druv' by their own burnin'," strengthened by "the strain of being in deadly earnest," and dignified by the conviction, laid up in the heart of every New Englander, that

> "Earth's biggest Country's gut her soul,
> An' risen up Earth's greatest Nation."

The serious poetry of this volume reaches a higher standard than the author has elsewhere attained. The short rural romance entitled *The Courtin'* is one of the freshest bits of pastoral in the language; and the descriptions incidental to the longer pieces—as that of the rail-posts "like ghosts o'

sogers should'rin' ghosts o' guns;" of the blackbirds "chatt'rin' in tall trees an' settlin' things in windy congresses;" of the spring leaping from April into June, and the lines on the singing of the Bobolink—are all the more effective because they are only incidental. As a specimen of his graver and maturer music, we select the following verses, in which tender regrets are mixed with triumph, verses both soft and strong, artistic and original. This, not the *Commemoration Ode*, is the author's masterpiece. I set it beside *Annabel Lee*, and regard these two poems, totally different though they are, as the two high-water marks of Transatlantic verse.

"Under the yaller pines I house,
When sunshine makes them all sweet-scented,
An' hear among their furry boughs
The baskin' west wind purr contented;
While 'way o'erhead ez sweet an' low,
Ez distant bells thet ring for meetin',
The wedged wil' geese their bugles blow,
Further and further South retreatin.'

"Or up the slippery knob I strain,
An' see a hunderd hills like islan's
Lift their blue woods in broken chain
Out o' the sea o' snowy silence;
The farm-smokes, sweetes' sight on airth,
Slow thru' the winter air a shrinkin',
Seem kin' o' sad, an' roun' the hearth
Of empty places set me thinkin'.

. . . . . .

"Rat-tat-tat tattle through the street
I hear the drummers makin' riot,
An' I set thinkin' o' the feet
Thet follered once an' now are quiet,—
White feet ez snowdrops innercent,
Thet never knowed the paths o' Satan,
Whose comin' steps there's ears thet won't,
No, not lifelong, leave off awaitin'.

. . . . . .

"'Ta'n't right to hev the young go fust,
All throbbin' full o' gifts an' graces;
Leavin' life's paupers dry ez dust
To try and make-b'lieve fill their places:

Nothin' but tells us wut we miss,
Ther's gaps our lives can't never fay in,
An' thet world seems so fur from this,
Lef' for us loafers to grow gray in!

"My eyes cloud up for rain; my mouth
Will take to twitchin roun' the corners;
I pity mothers, tu, down South,
For all they sot among the scorners:
I'd sooner take my chance to stan'
At Jedgment where your meanest slave is,
Than at God's bar hol' up a han'
Ez drippin' red ez your'n, Jeff Davis!

"Come, Peace! not like a mourner bowed
For honor lost an' dear ones wasted,
But proud to meet a people proud,
With eyes that tell o' triumph tasted!
Come, with han' grippin' on the hilt,
An' step that proves ye Victory's daughter!
Longin' for you, our sperits wilt
Like shipwrecked men's on raf's for water!

"Come, while our country feels the lift
Of a gret instinct shoutin' forwards,
An' knows that freedom a'n't a gift
Thet tarries long in han's o' cowards!
Come, sech ez mothers prayed for, when
They kissed their cross with lips thet quivered,
An' bring fair wages for brave men,
A nation saved, a race delivered!"

We have come a long way here from *Hail Columbia*, and the *Star-spangled Banner*. An English statesman not long ago said, "Jefferson Davis has made a nation of the South." It is much more true to say that his frustrated conspiracy made a nation of the North. The welding heat of the Liberation war refined the hearts of the people, whom it united, by withdrawing them from the pursuit of selfish ends and the studies of European art to the realisation of patriotic aims and aspirations. During many subsequent years in America the bonds of foreign fashion were broken, and even Commerce for a season became a secondary interest. The

heroic deeds and feelings of a time when, from Maine to Colorado, it has been a disgrace to have done nothing for the common cause,

> "Have cast in shadow all the golden lore
> Of classic Greece and Rome."

The same impulse which has made patriots of poets, and has given us Longfellow's *Wreck of the Cumberland*, and his beautiful *Christmas Bells*, and the terse dramatic lines entitled *Killed at the Ford*, has also made poets of patriots, and has given us the *Biglow Papers*.

The only sentences of this volume which an Englishman need read with regret are those in which the author discloses his feeling towards England. Like many of his co-patriots he persists in confounding together the perfectly consistent action of our Government and the inconsistent and unsympathetic criticisms of a portion of our press. The *spretæ injuria formæ* still rankles in his mind; he delights in calling Concord Road "John Bull's Run," and asserts that we have undone the healing work of fifty years. In his idyll entitled *Mason and Slidell* he exclaims—

> "Shall it be love or hate, John?
> It's you thet's to decide."

The critics of both nations can perform no worthier task than that of pointing the way to a wise decision, and helping to smooth over international differences by a candid recognition of the claims on either side. Nothing more should be needed to secure the harmonious action of the two great sections of the Anglo-Saxon race than the mutual consecration of the maxim which Mr. Lowell has himself so nobly expressed—"Our true country is bounded on the north and the south, on the east and the west, by Justice."

Of the anonymous ballad literature of the war only a few pieces are worthy of commendation. One of the earliest,

which appeared in a New Orleans paper of 1856, in anticipation of the event, beginning—

> "Men of the South, our foes are up
> In fierce and grim array"—

with *My Maryland*, and the *Blue Flag*, adopted by the rebels, are merely vigorous. Some of the Northern parodies on the presentations to the miscreant Brookes are more pointed: but the first recognised popular refrain of the Abolitionists is that circulated after the tragedy of Harper's Ferry, with the well-known lines, possibly suggested by *Tom Bowling*—

> "John Brown's body lies mouldering in the grave,
> But his soul is marching on."

At a later date, in the midst of the struggle, Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, authoress of several fine religious verses (notably *The Dead Christ*), was inspired to her adaptation, in a strain that recalls the Jewish Deborah, or Macaulay's *Battle of Naseby*, of the rough old catch—

> "Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;
> He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
> He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword;
> His Truth is marching on.
>
> "I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps;
> They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;
> I have read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps;
> His Day is marching on.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "He has sounded forth the trumpet that shall never call retreat;
> He is sifting out the hearts of men before His judgment seat;
> Oh, be swift, my soul, to answer Him; be jubilant, my feet—
> Our God is marching on.
>
> "In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,
> With a glory in His bosom, that transfigures you and me;
> As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,
> While God is marching on."

We are told that, an aged negro having contrived to con-

vey to the prisoners in the infamous "Libby"[1] the result of Gettysburg, they sang aloud this *Battle Hymn of the Republic* instinct with warrior Puritanism. Tidings of the victory reached the North on the 4th of July, with announcement of the fall of Vicksburg, and the people in public assemblies, rising as to a National Anthem, chanted the same verses, to which Lincoln listened with tears of gratitude.

After Lowell, JOHN GREENLEAF WHITTIER is the political lyrist, *par excellence*, of America. The two poets have much in common: they have been friendly rivals in popularity, both practical powers in moulding or hastening the movements of history. Of the latter it has been said, "Every word" he wrote on public questions "was a blow; many a timeserver, who was proof against Garrison's denunciations or Phillips's invectives, quailed before Whittier's rhymes." They were always on the same side—opponents of every image of oppression; hot-blooded philanthropists; democrats in the European, republicans in the American, sense; fierce against aristocracies and kings; inordinate haters of priests; otherwise liberal on religious, intolerant on moral, differences. The inspiration of both was due more to life than books, though Whittier, a farmer's boy, is said to have been instigated to his early efforts by reading Burns in the fields. Both have written too much, and, judging from internal evidence, too fast. One carries at once the glow and the common faults of youth into maturity, the other into age. Mr. John Bright, a closely kindred spirit to the Quaker bard, quotes Longfellow as saying of him, "He seems always to improve;" but even Whittier's later verse, rapid as a torrent, is apt to overflow its banks. He seldom knows when to stop, and, ringing endless changes on a few ideas, has never sufficiently discerned the difference between nouns and adjectives.

[1] The den in Richmond in which the Union prisoners, whom Davis refused to exchange, were nearly starved to death.

His fellow poet, patriot, and sinner, properly attributes to him—

> "A fervour of mind that knows no separation
> Twixt simple excitement and pure inspiration,"

adding, naively—

> "Then his grammar's not always correct nor his rhymes,
> And he's prone to repeat his own lyrics sometimes."

No one stands more in need of the advice given to Southey, "squeeze out the whey," and to no works more than to his is the maxim "πλεόν ἥμισυ παντός" more applicable. His lyrics have a verve, swing, and fire that impart to the reader a share of the writer's enthusiasm, but only a few of the best leave a permanent impression. His arrows strike the targe, but for the most part on the outer rings: he has never hit the white, as Lowell has done at least once or twice. A large proportion of the verses of this excellent professor of peace may be fairly characterised as war-songs. In virtue of these he has been universally hailed as the laureate of the anti-slavery struggle, to the issue of which he contributed, in an equal degree, with the orators and pamphleteers by whose side he fought, and the soldiers, against whose profession he declaimed. The answer of *Massachusetts to Virginia* about fugitive slaves, by which he first became known throughout the Union, is as distinct a challenge as any glove thrown down by a cavalier of Rupert or a modern Parisian editor. Three stirring stanzas must suffice to illustrate his martial mood—

> "We hear thy threats, Virginia! thy stormy words and high,
> Swell harshly on the Southern winds, which melt along our sky,
> Yet not one brown hard hand foregoes its honest labour here,
> No hewer of our mountain oaks suspends his axe in fear."

Then, after a description of the reefs of Labrador and Cape Ann, and their fishermen—

"The cold north light and wintry sun glare on their icy forms,
Bent grimly o'er their straining lines, or wrestling with the storms,
Free as the winds they drive before, rough as the waves they roam,
They laugh to scorn the slaver's threat against their rocky home.

. . . . . .

"But for us and for our children, the vow which we have given
For freedom and humanity is registered in heaven;
No slave-hunt in our borders—no pirate on our strand,
No fetters in the Bay-State—no slave upon our land."

In a similar key are *The Moral Warfare, The New Year, New Hampshire, The Hunters of Men, Stanzas for the Times, The Branded Hand, Pœan,* and in the same grim style, without a touch of humour (of which Whittier, unlike Lowell, is utterly devoid), the lines suggested by an auctioneer of New Orleans recommending a negress for sale on the stand as "A good Christian." Alongside of this group, is another, in which pathos prevails, the best known being *The Farewell* of a slave to her daughters, with the refrain—

"Gone, gone,—sold and gone
To the rice swamp dank and lone."

The whole series culminates and fitly closes in *Laus Deo,* the burst of acclamation with the "ring and swing of bells of joy" that celebrated the passage of Lincoln's constitutional amendment.

"Facit indignatio versus" is equally applicable to Whittier's invectives against other forms of tyranny, of which, whether in Russia or Rome, Naples or New England, he has a catholic abhorrence. Especially he commemorates and denounces the persecution of his own forefathers by the Puritans. To this theme one of the longest and strongest of his minor pieces, *Cassandra Southwick,* is devoted. Few of his polemics are without power; but they are multiplied almost to weariness: we turn with relief to his pastorals, impressions of the pleasant sights and sounds of nature (for which few poets have had a keener eye or ear), or simple ballads,

generally with some moral attached, relating to incidents real or imaginary of rural life. The most flowing of his mainly descriptive poems is that read on the banks of the Merrimack, at the close of the war, entitled *Revisited:* I select four of its sixteen stanzas—

"The roll of drums and the bugles wailing
Vex the air of our vales no more;
The spear is beaten to hooks of pruning,
The share is the sword the soldier wore.

"Sing soft, sing low, our lowland river,
Under the banks of laurel bloom,
Softly and sweet, as the hour beseemeth,
Sing us the songs of peace and home.

. . . . . .

"Shatter in sunshine over thy ledges,
Laugh in thy plunges from fall to fall;
Play with thy fringes of elms and darken
Under the shade of the mountain wall.

. . . . . .

"Here in the calm of thy seaward valley
Mirth and labour shall hold their truce;
Dance of water and mill of grinding,
Both are beauty, and both are use."

Whittier's narrative masterpiece is *Maud Müller*—a version of Browning's *Statue and the Bust*, more suited to an American meadow than to a Florentine palace. About half of the verses tell the story—

"Maud Müller, on a summer's day,
Raked the meadow sweet with hay:

. . . . . .

The Judge rode slowly down the lane,
Smoothing his horse's chesnut mane."

. . . . . .

He draws his bridle and receives from her hands a draught of water from a bubbling spring, and speaks—

"Of the grass and flowers and trees,
Of the singing birds and the humming bees.

. . . . . .

At last, like one who for delay
Seeks a vain excuse, he rode away :

Maud Müller looked, and sighed 'Ah me !
That I the Judge's bride might be !'

. . . . . .

The Judge looked back, as he climbed the hill
And saw Maud Müller standing still.

. . . . . .

'Would she were mine, and I to-day
Like her, a harvester of hay !'

But he thought of his sisters, proud and cold,
And his mother, vain of her rank and gold ;

So closing his heart, the Judge rode on,
And Maud was left in the field alone.

. . . . . .

But the lawyers smiled that afternoon
When he hummed in court an old love tune.

. . . . . .

He wedded a wife of richest dower,
She wedded a man unlearned and poor.

. . . . . .

Oft when the wine in his glass was red,
He longed for the wayside well instead.

. . . . . .

And oft when the summer sun shone hot
On the new-mown hay, in the meadow lot,

In the shade of the apple-tree again,
She saw a rider draw his rein.

. . . . . .

Sometimes her narrow kitchen walls
Stretched away into stately halls,

And for him who sat by the chimney lug,
Dozing and grumbling o'er pipe and mug,

A manly form at her side she saw,
And joy was duty and love was law ;

Then she took up her burden of life again,
Saying only, 'It might have been.'

Alas for maiden, alas for Judge,
For rich repiner and household drudge !

God pity them both, and pity us all
Who vainly the dreams of youth recall!

For of all sad words of tongue and pen,
The saddest are these, 'It might have been.'"

Of Whittier's longer works none has much unity. The earliest, *Mogg Megone* (1835), is, by his own confession, only "a framework for sketches of the scenery of New England and of its early inhabitants." The story of a double treachery and double murder committed by a girl, and the death of the Jesuit Ralle, leagued with the savages against the English, might have been thrilling in the hands of Robert Browning, but is unsuited to the author. *The Bridal of Pennacook* (1848), though more mature, is one of those Indian episodes which have been superseded by *Hiawatha*. Of his later considerable pieces, *Snowbound* (1865) is the narrative of a winter idyll, beautifully told by an old man, who recalls the circumstances of his father and all the family being "shut in from the world without" in a country farm, but making themselves happy in the sufficient kingdom of their mutual loves. The passages of regret for the ravages of time and change, conspicuously the apostrophe to the dead sister, are adequate to the theme; and, even in a brief review, the closing lines should have a place—

"And thanks, untraced to lips unknown,
Shall greet me, like the odours blown
From unseen meadows newly mown,
Or lilies floating in some pond,
Wood-fringed, the wayside gaze beyond;
The traveller owns the grateful sense
Of sweetness near, he knows not whence,
And, pausing, takes with forehead bare
The benediction of the air."

Among the Hills, consisting mainly of descriptions of scenery and character, might be appropriately called a summer idyll; while the *Pennsylvania Pilgrim* and the *King's Missive* are attempts to do the same poetical justice to the German and

Quaker element among the early settlers as has often been done to the Puritans. The *Tent on the Beach* is another effort to give a semblance of unity to a collection of separate pieces, by putting them in a frame. On an American sea-shore—which recalls the sands between Nahant and Lynn —three friends have pitched a tent, there "to fling their loads of custom down and escape a while from cares that wear the life away." The *dramatis personæ* are—a lettered magnate, a sun-tanned traveller, and

> "A dreamer born,
> Who with a mission to fulfil
> Had left the Muses' haunts to turn
> The crank of an opinion mill.
> . . . . . .
> In still shut bays on windy capes
> He heard the call of beckoning shapes,
> And, as the gray old shadows prompted him,[1]
> To homely moulds of rhyme he shaped their legends grim."

This editor, during the picnic, entertains the company by telling a series of pleasant tales, remarkable for smoothness, quiet beauty of sentiment, and occasional instances of vivid imagery. The music of *Rivermouth Rocks*, *The Palatine*, and *The Grave by the Lake*, rivals that of Longfellow's *Wayside Inn*. The most striking of the series is the *Brother of Mercy*—Piero Luca—who, on his deathbed, feeling himself too poor for the "grand company" of heaven, is abandoned by the stern monk, his confessor, but welcomed by the angels as one who, like Abou Ben Adhem, loves his fellow-men. The same supreme trust in the Divine love, which is the sum of Whittier's ardent faith, appears in the beautiful religious verses entitled the *Eternal Goodness* and *Our Master*. These are Catholic hymns, in the widest sense, commended by their humility as well as their comprehensiveness. The spirit which pervades them is condensed in the following verses :—

[1] This fatal termination to the line illustrates Whittier's inveterate carelessness; but much of this volume is comparatively free from his defects.

"And so beside the silent sea
I wait the muffled oar;
No harm from Him can come to me
On ocean or on shore.

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

"O brothers! if my faith is vain,
If hopes like these betray,
Pray for me that my feet may gain
The sure and safer way."

Whittier excels in a form of composition which has in America been carried to excess,—the writing of addresses, dedications, and epistles. Though prone to the amiable weakness of over-estimation, all his eulogies contain something characteristic of the subject as well as of the writer, whose transparent sincerity condones the excess of personal regard. Such are the short odes or sonnets to W. L. G.—again celebrated as "The Reformer"—to the memories of Thomas Shipley and John Woolman, to Follen, to Randolph of Roanoke, to Channing, to John Brown of Ossawatomie; the address, with the rare merit of condensation, to Thomas Starr King, and the lines addressed to Bryant on his seventieth birthday, November 3, 1864, with the stanza—

"Thank God! his hand on Nature's keys,
Its cunning keeps at life's full span;
But dimmed and dwarfed in days like these,
The poet seems beside the man."

Thirteen years passed, and on a similar anniversary, December 17, 1877, Bryant, whose old age to the last was green, wrote, in turn, in terms which represent the almost universal feeling entertained towards a man who claims from us more than the admiration due to his imperfect art.

"I should be glad to celebrate in verse the seventieth return of John Greenleaf Whittier's birthday; but I find I must content myself with humble prose. . . . I rejoice at the dispensation which has so long spared to the world a poet whose life is as beautiful as his verse, who has occupied himself only with noble themes and treated them nobly and grandly, and whose songs in the evening of life are as sweet and thrilling as those of his vigorous meridian. If the prayers of those who delight in his poems shall be heard, that life will be prolonged in all its serenity for the sake of a world which is the better of his having ~~vlied~~ lived."

In the same spirit wrote the veteran Richard H. Dana,—

"Unwilling to lose the opportunity of giving some mark of respect to one of so much truth to nature, manliness, and independence;" and adding, "although this be little else than an apology, I offer it with the plea that in one's *ninetieth* year not much more could be expected at a day's notice."

Among the verse tributes of the interesting festival the first place is properly assigned to one of the finest sonnets of Longfellow, addressed to the "Hermit of Amesbury," under the title of *The Three Silences*. Garrison's address to "The Poet of our Love" is full of his ever-generous gratitude to a fellow-worker and faithful friend. A true poet—the only other save Whittier of his sect—of whom, had space permitted, more should have been said—Bayard Taylor, who had travelled far, and written well of the East and West, contributes some of his always flowing lines, beginning—

"Snow-bound for earth, but summer-souled for thee
Thy natal morning shines.
Hail, Friend and Poet! Give thy hand to me,
And let me read its lines."

Edmund C. Stedman offers a cordial homage. Paul H. Hayne —kin to the brave Southern reactionary we have found in fight with Webster—sends two stanzas, that come from him with a peculiar grace—

"From this far realm of pines I waft thee now
A brother's greeting, poet tried and true;
So thick the laurels on thy reverend brow,
We scarce can see the white locks glimmering through.

"O, pure of thought! earnest in heart as pen,
The tests of time hath left thee undefiled;
And o'er the snows of three score years and ten
Shines the unsullied aureole of a child."

In the same series is *The Golden Calendar*, by OLIVER WENDELL HOLMES, one of the American authors whom, from his intellectual ubiquity, it is hard to classify. The ample outlet for energy of all kinds in "The States" enables one man in his time to play many parts—as physician, professor, judge, farmer, senator, or diplomatist. We no sooner agree to rank a writer as a poet than he reappears as a historian or teacher of theology, next as a sculptor, "fiddler, or buffoon," and—failing in all, according to Lord Beaconsfield—as a critic, till, growing impatient of his transformations, we exclaim, "Rest, rest, perturbed spirit." Fluent authors wax "desperate with imagination," and "there is a great scattering of brains." Holmes is mainly a humorist, but he takes fair rank as a political and patriotic poet in his *Old Ironsides*, a stirring appeal for the integrity of the Flag, though tattered in a hundred fights; his *Lexington*, his *Centennial Harvard Songs*, his *Odes to Washington and Webster*, his Songs in war time, his story of *Bunker Hill*, and memorial verses to Lincoln, and to Sumner. Many of his always graceful *vers de société*, as the old *Punch Bowl*, lean rather to the side of pathos than humour. Others, including half of the Breakfast Table Series, as *Homesick in Heaven*, *Under the Violets*, *etc.*, are purely serious. Several are marred by the versatility of a genius, that, unable to contain its heat, throws it off in fireworks. We are tempted to remind an author, with whom Latin quotations are frequent, "non omnia possumus omnes;" but

wherever, as in the following, he gathers himself together, he is successful :—

THE NAUTILUS.

" Its webs of living gauze no more unfurl ;
Wrecked is the ship of pearl,
And every chambered cell,
Where its dim dreaming life was wont to dwell,
As the frail tenant shaped his growing shell,
Before thee lies revealed,
Its irised ceiling rent, its sunless crypt unsealed !

" Year after year beheld the silent toil
That spread his lustrous coil ;
Still, as the spiral grew,
He left the past year's dwelling for the new,
Stole with soft step its shining archway through,
Built up its idle door,
Stretched in his last-found home, and knew the old no more.
. . . . . .

" Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll !
Leave thy low-vaulted past !
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free,
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea ! "

Half the literary men, and all the literary women of this century in America, seem to have written verses. Most of them are respectable, and so many are more so that, after dwelling on a few of the authors who most saliently represent the tendencies of their age and country, we can only name a few of their followers. Belonging to the earlier period are the *Pilgrim Fathers* of J. Pierpont; Woodworth's *Old Oaken Bucket; Home, Sweet Home*, by J. H. Payne; the verses of Washington Allston, with the refrain, " We are one;" and Epes Sargent's *A Life on the Ocean Wave*. Eminently worthy of note[1] are the miscellaneous and patriotic verses of James Gates Percival ; the sparkling fancies of the *Culprit Fay*, and the patriotic *American Flag*, by J. Rodman Drake ; the fashion-

[1] Besides those mentioned in connection with Whittier's birthday festival.

able satire in the Don Juan measure, entitled *Fanny*, by Fitz-Greene Halleck, author of the famous historical lyric, *Marco Bozzaris;* the *Curiosity*, and tuneful miscellanies of Charles Sprague; the poems of Cranch, of N. P. Willis, especially that by the latter, beginning "The Shadows lay along Broadway," and of J. G. Holland; Brownell's *Lyrics of the War;* the *Pike Court Ballads* of John Hay; *Sheridan's Ride*, and other pieces, by T. Buchanan Read; H. Timrod's addresses to the Confederate dead; the well-balanced stanzas of James A. Hillhouse; the plays of Conrad and Bird; *Woodman, Spare that Tree*, and the *Whip-Poor-Will*, by George P. Morris; Alfred B. Street's *Settler, Gray Forest-Eagle*, and *Forest Walk;* the remarkable Sonnets of Jones Very; *The King's Bell*, and other pieces, of R. H. Stoddard; numerous thoughtful verses of Edgar Faucit, F. Ticknor, and G. Parsons Lathrop; the ballads, grave and gay, of T. Bailey Aldrich, whose *Babie Bell* is a popular favourite, and whose *Lynn Terrace* is a fine diorama of foreign scenes; Piatt's *Western Windows:* with the group[1] of female singing birds, fairly represented by the religious and moral verses of the youthful prodigies Lucretia and Maria Davidson; with

[1] The gallantry of criticism has never been so stretched as in regard to some of these ladies, *e.g.* of Mrs. Osgood, we are told that "her poems sing of themselves," with "lovely grace and bewitching melodiousness;" of Mrs. Preston, "that her intellect is more robust and shows greater intensity;" of Mrs. Hunt, that "her imagination is subtle and her sentiment profound;" of Mrs. Whitman, that "her volume is a book of rare passionate beauty, marked by fine mental characteristics," and that "she is undoubtedly the finest female poet New England has produced." I have seen nothing in any of these writers that comes within sight of Mrs. Browning, or of Mrs. Hemans, Miss Proctor, Miss Ingelow, or Miss Rossetti. Mrs. Whitman has an interest for us, as the lady to whom, on the death of his first wife, Edgar Poe paid his addresses; but her versification is favourably represented by this stanza:—

> "I paused on Grecian plains to trace
> Some remnant of a mightier race,
> Serene in sorrow and in strife,—
> Calm conquerors of death and life,
> Types of the godlike forms that shone
> Upon the sculptured Parthenon."

those of Hannah F. Gould, Alice and Phœbe Carey, E. A. Lewis, Harriet Spofford, and Celia Thaxter, Mrs. F. S. Osgood, Mrs. M. J. Preston, Mrs. Helen Hunt, and Mrs. Whitman. A more ambitious effort is the strange and richly-coloured Eastern romance of *Zophiel*—on a theme similar to that of *Moore's Loves of the Angels* and Byron's *Heaven and Earth*—by "Maria del Occidente" (Mrs. Brooks), whom, with some exaggeration of friendship, Southey, one of her English hosts and admirers, declared to be "the most impassioned and imaginative of all poetesses." We may add one other name, that of Mrs. Sigourney, whose blank verse descriptions of nature approach those of Bryant, and conclude with the following specimen of one of her lighter pieces, to illustrate the use that the poets of the West have made of the musical nomenclature of their country :—

INDIAN NAMES.

"Ye say they all have passed away,
That noble race and brave ;
That their light canoes have vanished,
From off the crested wave.
That 'mid the forests where they roamed,
There rings no hunter's shout ;
But their name is on your waters,
Ye may not wash it out.

"'Tis where Ontario's billow,
Like ocean's surge is curled ;
Where strong Niagara's thunders wake
The echo of the world ;
Where red Missouri bringeth
Rich tribute from the West,
And Rappahannock sweetly sleeps
On green Virginia's breast.

"Ye say their cone-like cabins,
That clustered o'er the vale,
Have fled away like withered leaves,
Before the autumn gale.
But their memory liveth on your hills,
Their baptism on your shore ;
Your everlasting rivers speak
Their dialect of yore.

" Old Massachusetts wears it
Within her lordly crown ;
And broad Ohio bears it
Amid his young renown.
Connecticut hath wreathed it
Where her quiet foliage waves ;
And bold Kentucky breathed it hoarse
Through all her ancient caves.

" Wachuset hides its lingering voice
Within his rocky heart ;
And Alleghany graves its tone
Throughout his lofty chart.
Monadnock on his forest hoar,
Doth seal the sacred trust ;
Your mountains build their monument,
Though ye destroy their dust."

CHAPTER VIII.

AMERICAN TRANSCENDENTALISM.

LEAVING Cambridge, and taking the train on the other side of Boston, twenty minutes bring us to Concord, in Massachusetts. On one side of this "haunt of ancient peace" there lies, half buried in an orchard, a house whose attraction has been likened to that of the Arabian Mecca—the home of the most incisive writer, the most original thinker of the West. Unlike Longfellow, Emerson is an American of the Americans, nor does the contrast end here. The works of the one are finished wholes; of the other, fragments, rude though rich: the one soothes, the other excites us: the one loves to adorn the incidents of daily life, the other sees only general laws: the one runs history and biography into his verse, the other is an abstract moralist and metaphysician: the one maintains the connection between his country and the Past, the other is the moving spirit of a still recent revolution in the world of letters. An American writer finds his country well represented in the Paris Exhibition by the portrait of Emerson in its picture gallery; a sentiment which, giving a but slightly exaggerated expression to the feeling of a large section of educated Americans, calls for an examination of the sources and claims of an influence so widely extended. In comparing Mr. Emerson's English with his home reputation, we must deduct from the former his prestige as a brilliant conversa-

tionalist, and the power exerted by the "controlling sincerity" of his character. His name is to us the sign-post of an interesting stage in the progress of Transatlantic thought, and of a curious chapter in the history of Mysticism.

When the solitudes of the New World began to give place to noisy cities, the brains of her people were expended on the Farm or the Exchange, with a zeal only modified by the spirit and formulæ of the Faith that led the founders of the Northern States across the sea, and continued to infuse a religious element into their enterprises. We have seen that this element which elevated the settlers of New England above ordinary emigrants, adding to their strength, and giving a faster dye to their morality, was yet, in its original form, no more favourable to freedom or variety of thought than the Industrialism by which it was surrounded. The attitude assumed by the early Puritans toward the Quakers across the sea was that of men who had been taught by persecution how to persecute; and while the more elastic Mysticism of Fox took on new shapes in Philadelphia, the Calvinism of Edwards remained rigid in Connecticut. Meanwhile the storm of the Revolutionary war had diverted the majority of active minds into channels of activity hostile alike to poetry and metaphysics, and when the nation began to breathe leisurely in the first years of the century, that tide of imitation had set in which is only now beginning to ebb. European fashions reigned at New York, French political ideas at Washington. The mental philosophy of the West was limited to commentaries on Locke and Brown, and the eclecticism of Cousin, when suddenly the floodgates of German thought were opened on the land. To the republication of *Sartor Resartus* has been attributed the origin of a movement that really came because the time was ripe for it. It was a revolt against the reign of Commerce in practice, Calvinism in theory, and Precedent in Art, that gave birth to what has been called Transcendentalism.

Ideas, which filter slowly through English soil and abide there for a generation, flash like comets over the electric atmosphere of America. Coleridge and Carlyle were prophets in Boston, while their own countrymen were still examining their credentials, and suddenly the New England of letters exclaimed, "Go to, let us be metaphysical." The converts soon put their teachers to the blush: from Materialism and solid Scotch Psychology they rushed to the outer verges of Idealism or Mysticism, and manifested in a new direction the same disregard of limit and degree which had been wont to mark the financial transactions of Wall Street. "Every form of intellectual or physical dyspepsia," says a Transatlantic reviewer, "brought forth its gospel. . . . Communities were established where everything was to be common but common-sense. Men renounced their old gods, and hesitated only whether to bestow their allegiance on Thor or on Buddha. A gift of tongues spread like a contagion, rendering its victims incomprehensible. It was the Pentecost of Shinar." This, and more, he says regarding the ludicrous phase of the movement, characteristically caricaturing ideas which his countrymen had pushed to a characteristic extreme; but the fullest representation of the Transcendentalists as a group is to be found in the pages of the *Dial*, a magazine which, during four years, upheld their views in four volumes of miscellaneous merit. The *Dial* is a Pantheon—from which only Utilitarians are excluded—where the worshippers meet and sing hymns to Confucius and Zoroaster, to Kant, Plato, Goethe, and Richter, all set to German music. They pass from world-old praise of Homer and Shakespeare to friendly recognition of new heresies, from thoughts of the divinity of labour to puffs of poetasters, from Hindoo Mythology and Chinese Ethics to nineteenth century truisms about Progress, and Union, and Humanity; from soaring among the cloud-capped heights of a modern Religion of Beauty to raking among "the tangled

roots and dead leaves of a second-hand Orientalism." This magazine, which abounds in criticisms, mostly panegyrical, has several verses seldom remarkable for anything save obscurity—verses that often anticipate almost *verbatim* those of the New Oxford, or revived Della-Cruscan school; vigorous sermons, spoilt by violences, of Theodore Parker; the *Orphic Sayings* of Alcott,[1] the Socratic sage, divining or dreaming in his garden; four or five essays of Emerson; with the tales and allegories of Margaret Fuller, afterwards D'Ossoli. This remarkable woman, whose powers are imperfectly reflected in her writings, has been called the Sibyl, the Circe, and the Hypatia of the Western intellectual world. Her true genius

[1] That I may not be accused of disrespect to one of the most estimable of men, I give, as types alike of his wise musing and his wild maundering, four *Orphic Sayings*; some passages exemplify the matter and manner of the Dialists, when they cut the cables of common-sense.

XLIII.—GENESIS.

The popular Genesis is historical. It is written to sense not to the soul. Two principles, diverse and alien, interchange the Godhead, and sway the world by turns. God is dual. Spirit is derivative. Identity halts in diversity. Unity is actual merely. The poles of things are not integrated; creation globed and orbed. Yet in the true Genesis nature is globed in the material, souls orbed in the spiritual, firmament. Love globes, wisdom orbs all things. As magnet the steel, so spirit attracts matter, which trembles to traverse the poles of diversity, and rest in the bosom of unity. All Genesis is of love. Wisdom is her form, beauty her costume.

LXI.—TEMPTATION.

The man of sublime gifts has his temptation amidst the solitudes to which he is driven by his age as proof of his integrity. Yet nobly he withstands this trial, conquering both Satan and the world by overcoming himself. He bows not down before the idols of time, but is constant to the divine ideal that haunts his heart, a spirit of serene and perpetual peace.

LXXIII.—SCRIPTURE.

All Scripture is the record of life, and is sacred or profane as the life it records is holy and profane. Every noble life is a revelation from Heaven, which the joy and hope of mankind preserve to the world. Nor while the soul endures shall the Book of Revelation be sealed. Her scriptures, like herself, are inexhaustible, without beginning or end.

C.—SILENCE.

Silence is the initiative to wisdom. Prudence is the footprint of wisdom. Wit is silent, and justifies her children by their reverence of the voiceless oracles of the breast. Inspiration is dumb, a listener to the oracles during her nonage. Suddenly she speaks, to mock the emptiness of all speech. Silence is the dialect of heaven, the utterance of gods.

seems to have been that of a conversationalist: the subtle analysis of her prose, and the fine feeling of her sonnets, was muffled in the gold-mists of rhapsody, and marred by a conceit whose candour is its main excuse. Thought and passion brandish their Thyrses, in a Mænad dance; while she pours forth her half knowledge of half the philosophers, musicians, and poets of the world, in page on page of hot but disorderly eloquence. Her "æsthetic teas" rivalled those of the Hotel Rambouillet, or the receptions of our more modern "Utters:" her influence was as striking and as fleeting as that of a half-inspired, half-demented, actor on a temporary stage.

Even the most apparently affected forms of the new doctrine were valuable counteractives to the mere materialism round which they grew. Its votaries had laid hold of a faith, sincere though obscure, in something beyond tariffs and wharfs and exchanges: they believed in a wealth of ideas, transcending the wealth of millionaires, and reasserted the principle that the formulæ of one age are inadequate to meet the wants or express the feelings of another; but their "fine frenzy" might have soon faded into common day, or, like the Art-worship of Frederick Schlegel, ended by subsiding in the Church, had not their best aspirations been concentrated and vitalised by an original thinker, who took upon himself the task of nationalising and giving a fresh practical turn to the old idealisms. English "Hero-worship" would have been vague without Carlyle; American "Transcendentalism" vapid without Emerson. Their relation as leaders of the later Romantic reaction is thus well expressed by the reviewer to which we have already referred:—

"Both represented the old battle against Philistinism. It was again, as in the times of Erasmus, of Lessing, of Wordsworth, a struggle for fresh air, in which, if the windows could not be opened, there was danger that panes would be broken, though painted with effigies of saints and martyrs. . . . When Emerson wrote, New England Puritanism, as a motive of spiritual progress was dead, and in him, the herald of its

formal decease, it found its new avatar . . . The Puritan revolt had made us ecclesiastically, and the revolution politically, independent; but we were still socially and intellectually moored to English thought till Emerson cut the cable and gave us a chance at the dangers and glories of blue water. No man young enough to have felt it can forget or cease to be grateful for the mental and moral *nudge* (!) which he received from the writings of his brave-spirited countryman. That we agree with him, or that he always agrees with himself, is aside from the question; but that he arouses in us something that we are the better of having awakened,—that he speaks always to what is highest and least selfish in us,—few Americans of the generation younger than his own will be disposed to deny. His oration before the Phi-Beta-Kappa Society at Cambridge, some thirty years ago, was an event unprecedented in our literary annals, a scene to be always treasured in the memory for its picturesqueness and inspiration. What crowded and breathless aisles, what windows clustering with eager heads, what enthusiasm of approval, what grim silence of foregone dissent! It was our Yankee version of a lecture by Abelard, our Harvard parallel to the last public appearance of Fichte."

This extract[1] is an interesting fragment of the history of literature: it may be well to give a brief *résumé* of the address to which the closing sentences refer, as it strikes the keynote of much of its author's philosophy. Mr. Emerson begins by declaring that the time has come for American literature to assert its independence, and for his hearers to form an estimate of the Scholar as he should be in their country. He ought to be an entire man and not a mere thinking machine. Of the influences brought to bear upon him, the first is that of Nature, as interpreted by the mind. Her laws are important to us only as represented by the laws of thought; and science is nothing but the discovery of analogies in the universe. So that the ancient precept, "Know thyself," and the modern precept, "Study Nature," become one maxim. The next great influence is that of the Past as recorded in books. These are good for study, for inspiration; but each age has to write its own. We had better never see a book than be warped by it out of our natural orbit. We hear that

[1] This criticism appears among the Essays of Mr. Lowell.

we may speak. One must be an inventor to read well. History and Science we learn from the printed page; but the education of Colleges can only serve us when it aims not to drill but to create. The idea that the scholar should be a recluse is a monkish error. Action is essential to the ripening of his manhood. Inaction is cowardice, and there can be no scholar wanting the heroic mind. The recluse soon exhausts his single vein, "like those Savoyards, who, getting their livelihood by carving wooden figures for all Europe, went one day to the mountain to find stock, and discovered that they had whittled up the last of their pine-trees." Life is our dictionary and our grammar. Colleges and books only copy the language which the field and the workyard made. Character is higher than intellect, the thinker than his thought. There is dignity as well as necessity in labour. So much for the education of the scholar. As to his duties, they may all be comprehended in self-trust. His office is to cheer, to raise, to guide men, by showing them facts under appearances. In discharging it he must be patient, self-denying, and resolutely true. He must relinquish display and fame, endure disdain and poverty, because he will not tread the old paths or accept the old fashions. He is to find consolation only in exercising the highest functions of human nature. He is one who lifts himself above private cares, and breathes and lives on public and illustrious thoughts—the world's eye and the world's heart. In silence and steadfastness let him hold by himself, add observation to observation, patient of neglect, patient of reproach, and bide his time. If he can satisfy himself that he has seen the truth, and planted his foot beyond the shores of change, the unstable estimates of men will crowd to him "as the heaped waves of the Atlantic follow the moon." The scholar should be brave and free, for the world is his who can see through its pretension. Plastic and fluid in the hands of God and His attributes, to ignorance and sin

it is flint. The great man makes the great thing; but we must not suffer the great men of the Past to enslave our minds. They have only done for us what we can one day do for ourselves. He has never lived who can feed us for ever, or set a barrier on any one side to the unbounded empire of the common nature in which we have each a share. "It is one central fire, which flaming now out of the lips of Etna lightens the capes of Sicily, and now out of the throat of Vesuvius illuminates the towers and vineyards of Naples. It is one soul which animates all men." This is a skeleton of the harangue which, with added graces of style and manner, thrilled through the ears of the Cambridge audience, and is reprinted for the review of our calmer judgments in the first of seven volumes of prose essays, throughout which the author continues to enforce, expand, and illustrate the same ideas.

In reverting to the celebrated literary efforts of former years we are often puzzled to account for the effect which they are known to have produced. To do so we must carry ourselves back to our own boyhood. There are many now of middle age to whom the first reading of Carlyle and Emerson brought the sense of a new revelation. To us, in that period of ready enthusiasm, as to the first students of Schelling, or the first imitators of Goethe, the oracles seemed to be no longer dumb: Nature took on new meanings, and the secret of life was about to be unfolded. It is well for the fame of an author when time and study do not entirely dissipate these delusions, and in this respect, perhaps, Carlyle has stood the test better than Emerson. But both have suffered by the diffusive force of their own genius, which, in making their ideas common, has often made them appear commonplace. When a fresh thinker first begins to speak, the outer world is apt to suspect his sanity: ere he has done, it questions his originality. When the words of the poet, who began by head-

ing an artistic revolt, get into the air we breathe, we call him a national mouthpiece; and the paradoxical philosopher, whose eloquence has gathered a crowd, becomes a type in harmony with his age and country. In Mr. Emerson's Harvard discourse, indeed, there is scarce anything of which, taken separately, we need fail to trace the pedigree. Fichte had, many years before, spoken in the same strain of the vocation and nature of the scholar, and on the battlefield confuted the notion that he should be a recluse. The Philosopher of *The Republic* and the Stoic Sage are older prototypes of the New World's latest ideal. "Science, the discovery of analogies," is a leaf from Boehme, or Swedenborg, or Schelling: the Dignity of Labour comes directly from Carlyle. The originality, as is the case with the author's whole system of thought, is in the combination, which, it may be, is the only kind of originality now possible. His defence of others from the charge of uninventiveness may be pleaded for himself— "As every house is a quotation out of all forests and mines and stone-quarries, so every man is a quotation from all his ancestors." There is a lazy eclecticism, producing mere patchwork, and expressing itself in a borrowed style, which is an infallible sign of weakness; but, with the heirs of so many ages, absolute originality is only possible to absolute ignorance. True talent shows itself not in bubble speculations, but in mastering the Past. Chaucer feeds on the old fields; Shakespeare pirates all his plots: the madman and the sensation novelist are the only pure inventors. The larger our circle the more chance do we have of *intersecting* others: the requisite to a *raison d'être* is that we have a centre of our own, and be not *included within* the circle of another; in other words, that we be complements not corollaries of other men. Emerson has emphatically a centre of his own in his intense modernism. A Democratic Platonist, his assertion of independence s more extreme than inconsistent. To borrow Bacon's

analogy, he leans rather to the error of the spider than of the ant.

He has, by the majority of his critics, been ranked as a Mystic; he prefers to call himself an Idealist, and his position, as far as it is tenable or distinct, illustrates the fact that the standard divisions of philosophy are being continually altered and replaced, as old systems form affinities with new beliefs and phases of character. In his lecture on Transcendentalism, delivered at Boston in 1842, he gives a rough division of mankind into two sects: "the first class founding on experience, the second on consciousness" . . . the one "insisting on facts, on history, on the force of circumstances and the animal wants of man;" the other "on the power of Thought and of Will, on Inspiration, on miracle, on individual culture."

Between these two classes of thinkers Emerson unhesitatingly takes part with the second, with the Platonist against the Aristotelean. He everywhere exalts mental abstractions and depreciates matter; he relies on the unity of reason in opposition to the variety of sense; he believes that the mind can make its own circumstances, and holds that the object is either identical with, or the product of, the subject. But this *a priori* manner of thinking has from an early period developed itself in two schools, whose boundaries are often conterminous, but which are also capable of being contrasted. The rank of Mysticism in history and its relation to other systems are not yet exactly determined. M. Cousin places it at the close of his fourfold list as a reaction against the scepticism engendered by the conflicting extremes of Materialism and Idealism. According to the generalisation of M. Comte, it ought to belong to the earliest of the three great eras of human thought, for in all its phases it has been more or less theological. Neither view entirely coincides with fact: both too much neglect the light which is thrown on the formation of theories

of the universe by biography. Mysticism appeared at an early stage in India as a reaction rather against literalism than scepticism. It closed Greek philosophy. It ran alongside of the formalism of the Middle Ages. It was attached by the Sufis to the creed of Islam. It allied itself with the early Protestantism of Germany and the counter Catholicism of Spain, and endeavoured in the hands of Paracelsus and Boehme to build a temple to itself out of the crude guesses of Alchemy and Astrology, which mark the dawn of modern science. Mysticism has been associated in turn with Theism, Atheism, and Pantheism, with a belief and a disbelief in outward revelations, with "the fugitive and cloistered virtue" of the ascetic and the "*os rabidum*" of the fanatic, with the "holy indifference" of Quietism and the licence of the Anabaptist; in the New World, with the opposite extravagances of Mount Lebanon and Oneida Creek: but at every stage of its development it has been distinguished from Idealism proper by its appeal to Faith as an ultimate authority, by its exaltation of Emotion above Reasoning, by its disdain of regular methods and impatience of partial truths, by its withdrawal from active life, and generally by its tendency to submerge the individual in the universal—man in God. In most of these points Mr. Emerson, in many passages of his prose and verse, claims affinity with the Mystics of all ages. He defines Transcendentalism as "the Saturnalia or excess of Faith." He commends the extravagant fatalism, the philanthropy of despair, embodied in Buddhism—the most portentous creed of self-annihilation that the world has seen. He repeats the dictum of the Yoga—"Illumination is the property of Purity." In the *Woodnotes* his "eternal Pan who layeth the world's incessant plan," who is the "axis of the star and the sparkle of the spar" and the "heart of every creature," recalls the address of Crishna to Ardjoun in the *Bhagavad Gita*—"I am the vapour in the water, the light in the sun and in the

moon, the invocation in the Vedas, the sound in the air, the life in animals, the eternal seed of all nature." Among the elder Greeks he reiterates the half-eastern rhapsodies of Heraclitus—

> "Out of sleeping a waking,
> Out of waking a sleep;
> Life Death overtaking,
> Deep underneath deep,"—

and neglects the stricter logic of Parmenides and Zeno. "Plato is philosophy and philosophy is Plato" is one of his dogmatic generalisations, but he deserts Plato for Plotinus in his belief in ecstacy and "the ineffable union of God and man in every act of the soul," in his declaration that "the words 'I' and 'mine' constitute ignorance" of that unity "wherein every man's is made one with all other" being, and in his prevailing reverence for the Orientals. With Plato Dialectic is the crown of science to be attained by a long process of thought and education—"*συνερίθοις καὶ συμπεριγωγοῖς χρωμένη ἅις διήλθομεν τέχναις.*" He would be glad of a raft to float him down the stream to a haven. Emerson soars, with Icarus wings, above Dialectic to *ἕνωσις*, and, with the self-confidence which marks one phase of mysticism, exclaims, "The relations of the soul to the divine spirit are so pure that it is profane to seek to interpose helps; means, teachers, texts, temples, fall away from the simple mind;" and again, "Fear and hope are alike beneath Intuition; it asks nothing, and is raised above passion." "Prayer, as a means to effect a private end, supposes dualism in nature and consciousness; as soon as the man is at one with God he will see prayer in all action." "We live in succession in parts and particles. Meanwhile within man is the soul of the whole, the wise silence, the universal beauty, the Eternal One." "The act of seeing and the thing seen, the seer and the spectacle, the subject and the object, are one." "The simplest person who in his integrity worships God be-

comes God." "A man is the façade of a temple wherein all wisdom and all good abide. The soul whose organ he is, breathing through his intellect, is genius—through his will, virtue—through his affection, love."

Mysticism, which has ever aimed at transcending the world, has in various ages striven to accomplish its end by various methods. The ancient mystics believed in philosophers, the mediæval in saints. Mr. Emerson endeavours to comprehend the manifold forms of their faith in a catholic eclecticism. To his mind "the trances of Socrates, the union of Plotinus, the vision of Porphyry, the conversion of Paul, the aurora of Boehme, the convulsions of George Fox and the Quakers, the illumination of Swedenborg, the rapture of the Moravian and Quietist, the revival of the Calvinist churches," are different names for the "divine visits" of God-intoxicated men, phrases more or less imperfect to express that common inspiration which is the religious sanction of his own philosophy, the only certain recompense of a noble life. He is willing to use the language, and in some degree to think the thoughts, of all their sects; but, deriving something from them all, he entirely accords with none. To him, as to the Yogi and the Alexandrian, man is a theatre where the powers of heaven play, passing through the transformations of life to a Universal Being; but he is bound neither to the Vedas nor the Phædo. With Proclus he looks on the world as a system of hidden hierarchies, with Erigena he makes Hell a metaphor for the law of Compensation, with Hugo of St. Victor he holds "ascendere ad Deum est intrare in se ipsum." He walks by the "inward light" of the early Quakers and the "Funken der Seele" of the Germans of the fourteenth century. Eckart and Tauler speak for him in saying, "He who is at all times alone, is worthy of God who is then present." "The eye, whereby I see God, is the same eye whereby He seeth me." "The spirit mounts to the Divine Dark like the eagle towards

the sun ;" and Suso anticipates, in more impassioned verse, the triumph of the transcendentalist who has in fancy raised himself "above multiplicity to the Essence," above effects to the Cause, above the storms of humanity to the Eternal Rest. But almost all these writers had, in the last analysis, a definite creed, and deferred to a recognised authority. Their "divine love," concentrated on a divine Person, supplied the place of a strong earthly attachment in cancelling self. Their enthusiasms and raptures were the result of mortifications and prayer. Mediæval mysticism, with all its vagueness, was a genuine abnegation of the world. Its ethical tendency is summed in a sentence of the *De Imitatione Christi*—"It is altogether necessary that thou take up a genuine contempt for thyself if thou desire to prevail against flesh and blood." Mr. Emerson has little of this spirit of submission. He approaches the Egotheism of the Sufis, in his self-assertion and his use of expressions, which are more calculated to shock than to conciliate the uninitiated. As with them, it seems to him that man cannot do without God, nor God without man, both being essential features of the same indivisible nature. Yet he homologates the paradoxical resignation of the Quietists in his doctrine of a grace above virtue, and in his elimination of the ordinary meanings of reward and punishment from among the motives of life. His scepticism, like the allegorical figure in Bishop Taylor's sermon,[1] puts out the fires of Hell and burns up Paradise : his "meek lover of the good" not only passes Space and Time and the "flammantia mœnia mundi," but "turns his back on Heaven." Of European mystics Swedenborg is his favourite, as the author of one of the five lines which abide the winnowing of the ages. In Emerson's vision, as in that of the oracular Swede, "the fields of space are threaded by magnetic influences, and the stars chime to the chords of music; every planet is related

[1] An older form of this occurs in Joinville's *Chronicle*.

to every plant, each colour to each sound." With him as with Herbert, "man is one world and hath another to attend him:" the universe is a constellation of types. He reads the Macrocosm by the Microcosm; but is content with a general reading, with the knowledge of laws to the exclusion of minor facts. He despises the details of all beliefs, and holds that the best worship has the least ceremonial.

Mysticism has been compared to a rocket rushing with a white light towards the sky, redescending in coloured streams to the earth. It has in almost all ages had two sides—the Theosophic and the Theurgic—a divine dream of unity with God or nature, and a popular machinery of visions and spells, an artificial and often sensuous phantasmagoria. To this latter phase, represented by Jamblichus among the Neo-Platonists, by the hysterical ecstacies of St. Theresa and John of the Cross, by the magic workers and Cagliostros of a later date, American Transcendentalism has no affinity. Its modern equivalents are the Joe Smith gospels and Poughkeepsie ghosts, which the Transcendentalists, as a rule, hold in sovereign contempt. Mr. Emerson, in particular, wholly repudiates the materialistic Mysticism which, believing in nothing on which it cannot lay its fingers, descends to meet the materialistic scepticism of the age. He despises and derides "the Millenium mathematics, the peacock ritualism, the maundering of Mormons, the squalor of Mesmerism, the deliration of rappings, the rat-and-mouse revelation, thumps in table drawers and black art." He will have "no picking of locks," holds no converse with Theurgy, and on this score he parts company even with Swedenborg, maintaining that "his revelations destroy their credit by running into detail . . . the spirit which is holy is reserved and taciturn, and deals in laws. Hobgoblins gossip and tell fortunes." Again, "Swedenborg's perception of nature is not human and universal, but mystical

and Hebraic. He fastens each natural object to a theologic notion . . . and poorly tethers every symbol to a several ecclesiastic sense. The slippery Proteus is not so easily caught. Nature is no literalist;" and again, "He delivers golden sayings which express with singular beauty the ethical laws . . . yet after his mode he pins his theory to a temporary form. . . . He has devils. . . . His Inferno is mesmeric. His spiritual world bears the same relation to the generosities and joys of truth as a bad man's dreams bear to his ideal life;" and once more, "Socrates' genius did not advise him to act or to find, but if he proposed to do somewhat not advantageous it dissuaded him. 'What God is,' he said, 'I know not; what He is not I know.' . . . The secret of heaven is kept from age to age. No imprudent, no sociable angel ever dropt an early syllable to answer the longings of the saints, the fears of mortals."

Mr. Emerson sympathises with the unsatisfied aspirations of all ages—with the day-dreams of restlessness in search of rest that have imagined Cridevana and Hesperia and Avalon; that sent the knights of the Middle Age in quest of the Sangreal, and led the monks to christianise the eastern Nirvana; that laid out Brook Farm in Massachusetts, and gave Novalis and Newman back to the fold of Rome; but he will not be drawn by them into any Church with walls. All religions are to his mind "the same wine poured into different glasses:" he drinks the wine and tries to shatter the glasses. His unflinching scepticism pierces the armour of all definite dogmas, while he entrenches himself behind an Optimism like that of Spinoza. He thus breaks with the more consistent majority of mystics in his disdain of Authority: he breaks with them yet more decidedly in his strong assertion of Individuality. Mysticism has, in the main, been fatalistic. As a developed system its natural home is in the East, where the influence of great uniformities of soil

and climate have only in recent years been partially counteracted by the conquering activities of an energetic race. Beneath her burning sun, and surrounded by her tropic vegetation, the mass of men were overwhelmed by a sense of their insignificance, and this feeling of subjugation was intensified by absolute forms of government. The same listlessness which permitted a secular and priestly despotism led its victims to welcome the idea of a final absorption of their individuality. Their philosophical ambition was to pass into the framework of a gigantic Nature, to be "rolled round in earth's diurnal course with rocks and stones and trees." "The complete end of man," says the first aphorism of Kapila, "is the complete cessation of pain." There is a relic of this spirit in the *ἀταραξία*, *ἀπάθεια*, and *ἠρεμία*, which are the aims at once of the Epicurean and Stoic systems; but the Eastern doctrines of passive obedience had been banished from Greece as early as the overthrow of the Pythagorean Institute. They revived in the dark and middle ages when the Church took upon itself the task of legislating for the intellect; and even the precursors of the Reformation were possessed with an almost oppressive sentiment of resignation. "He who wills and does nothing is best" is a truly Oriental saying attributed to Eckart, the mystical teacher of Tauler. The reproduction of the Oriental spirit in America, in so far as it is genuine and not the mere expression of a love of far-fetched quotations, may be attributed to external influences in some respects comparable to those which weighed on the inhabitants of ancient India. In the Western, as formerly in the Eastern, World, Nature still struggles to assert her old supremacy, and threatens to domineer over men's minds by the vastness of her empire. But in other respects the conditions are reversed. In place of stagnation and uniform, although magnificent, decay, we have to deal with the manifold progress of the nineteenth century civilisation in a land

where every one is more or less inspired by the resolve of the modern mariner with an ancient name, to "sail beyond the sunset" in pursuit of fresh adventures; where the energies of the individual are in constant, and, in the long run, triumphant, struggle with all that tends to restrict the full sweep of his arm, or to retard the freest activities of his mind; where every moon sees new forests felled, new rivers crossed, new fleets built, new tribes amalgamated, new discussions raised, and new problems solved. Mysticism, if it exist at all, must take on a form very different from that handed down from the East of 3000 years ago to the Alexandrians, and transmitted to the European ages of implicit faith by the psuedo Dionysius. Mr. Emerson strikes the keynote of the difference when he writes, "Feudalism and Orientalism had long enough thought it majestic to do nothing; the modern majesty consists in work." Retaining from the mystics his belief in the supremacy of the higher emotions, he by no means discards the senses, and substitutes for a religious creed an idealised view of modern physical science.

Emerson's Church is the *Natura Naturata*—the rich external Nature of the Dorian mythology, the modern painter's and poet's "fair round world of light and shade." Neither Wordsworth nor Shelley plunge with more delight into this bath of beauty and power, whose "medicinal enchantments" sober and heal our hearts. Lucretius has not better appreciated the "severa silentia noctis." No sun-worshipper of the Magi or the Incas could gaze more intently on the morning sky. Thus he writes, "We nestle in Nature and draw our living as parasites from her roots and grains, and we receive glances from the heavenly bodies which call us to solitude and forestall the future. . . . The blue zenith is the point in which romance and reality meet." In the same spirit he sings of the remedial life in the season of buds and birds—

"Spring still makes spring in the mind
When sixty years are told:
Love wakes anew this throbbing heart,
And we are never old."

But the sermon within the Church is the *natura naturans*, the inscrutable Force, the hidden law, the "something far more deeply interfused," the "quick Cause before which all forms flee as the driven snow," publishing itself in creatures, rising "through transformation on transformation to the highest symmetries, from the granite to the oyster, from the trilobite to man, from the gorilla to Plato and Shakespeare. It is Goethe's *Erdgeist*, weaving all shapes in the same wondrous web, the spirit of the Muse that "lays her beams in music," the inspiration of the philosopher who "hears the words of the Gods," Nature revealing in beauty, in art, and, highest of all, in moral nobleness, as much of her secrets as it is permitted us to learn—

"If thou would'st know the mystic song,
Chaunted when the sphere was young;
To the open ear it sings,
Sweet, the Genesis of things;
Of tendency through endless ages,
Of star dust and star pilgrimages;
Of rounded worlds, of space and time,
Of the old flood's subsiding shine;
Of charnic matter, force, and form,
Of poles and powers, cold, wet, and warm."

Mr. Emerson's allegorical poetry is mainly employed in giving a body, at times somewhat nebulous, to what we may term his physical Idealism. The Nature we see around us in stellar, geologic, and human history, is, he maintains, the key to the Nature which is unseen, the law by which the fabric moves and the "spirit walks from state to state." The final cause of this continual change or "rushing metamorphosis" he holds to be the production of higher forms of life, and, diverging in this respect from the old pre-Socratic

philosophies of the universe, of which in others he often reminds us, he believes in humanity as "the roof and crown of things." In his temple, man as he is plays the part of the worshipper, and man as he ought to be and may be, is the chief object of worship. In this spirit his *Song of Nature* anticipates the development yet awaiting the race—

> "The building in the coral sea,
> The planting of the coal,"

are many a thousand summers old,

> "And still the man-child is not born,
> The summit of the whole.
>
> . . . . . .
>
> "Let war and trade and creeds and song
> Blend, ripen race on race;
> The sunburnt world a man shall breed,
> Of all the zones and countless days.
>
> "No ray is dimmed, no atom worn,
> My oldest force is good as new,
> And the fresh rose on yonder thorn
> Gives back the blending heavens in dew."

The *prima origo* of this perpetual evolution Mr. Emerson pronounces to be inscrutable. He regards the physical postulate, "give us matter and motion and we will construct the universe," as a begging of the question: he admits the necessity of Plato's unmoved mover, and, from the fact that all change is progress, recognises an Orderly Intelligence at its root.

> "Once slept the world an egg of stone,
> And pulse, and sound, and light was none;
> And God said, Throb, and there was motion,
> And the vast mass became vast ocean."

But if we inquire further regarding this primordial Power who mixes the atoms and makes them "march in time;" if we seek to know more of the nature of God than is revealed in the first chapter of the Hebrew Genesis, he holds, with

Professor Tyndall, that we are attempting to transcend our faculties. We must be satisfied to affirm that "Conscious law is King of kings," and that, whether as nature or Deity, it orders all things for the best. Our author repeats or reproduces all the formulæ of the Aristotelean Optimism—*φύσις ὀυδὲν μάτην ποιεῖ—ἔχει τι θεῖον.* The world is very good. Nature is *τέλος καὶ βέλτιστον.* She does nothing *πενιχρῶς,* in a mercenary spirit, but "adds in every instance a slight generosity, a drop too much," whence the tendency to excess necessary to life, the electricity without which the air would rot, the excitement of fanaticism, the redundancy of passion. "We hit above the mark to hit the mark," and all things are needful to each and each to all. Without conflict there would be no virtue; without imperfection in parts, no progress, which is the condition of life. Mr. Emerson's Optimism goes even farther than this. He accepts the position of the Megareans, that evil itself is only good in the making, that it differs from good only by a minus quantity, that, in its essence, it is not a real thing. Like Spinoza, "he acknowledges no hell, no devil, no positive and active agency at enmity with God; but sees in all things infinite gradations of beings all in their way obedient, and all fulfilling the part allotted to them." "Nothing," he exclaims, "shall warp me from the belief that every man is a lover of truth. There is no pure lie, no malignity in nature. The entertainment of the proposition of depravity is the last profligacy and profanation." And even this profanation must itself have a moral result in the eyes of Him who maintains

> "That night or day, that love or crime,
> Leads all souls to the good."

The American transcendentalist arrives at his conclusions much more easily than Spinoza: they are not rigorous logical deductions from premises professing to be axiomatic, but isolated assertions, frequently inconsistent with each other,

founded on the impulses, which he calls the intuitions, of a sanguine and pure, though in some directions a limited, mind. Without attempting to throw any light on the problem here suggested, we may safely assert that our author's solution of it is unsatisfactory. Like a healthy man's view of disease, it is unsympathetic, even dangerous. To say that Evil is negative is a play on words, which does nothing to explain its origin, and little to unfold its purpose. We feel pain, sorrow, and sin, in active as well as in passive forms, in contrast, as great as ever, to pleasure, joy, and holiness: the question remains, Whence comes this perpetual negation? We may try to find the "type of Perfect" in the outer world; but Nature, at first sight, rather suggests a dualism. We may look for it in the mind; but all men, except confirmed saints and consistent philosophers, are conscious of an *ἀθάνατος μάχη*, "a baseness in the blood at such strange war with something good," that its moral aspect only deepens the mystery. Theologians have, successfully or not, endeavoured to unravel it. Thorough-going materialists have their answer in a reference to the blind working of purely physical laws. It has always been a stumblingblock to systems which more or less identify man with God. Mr. Emerson hardly seems to realise the magnitude of the difficulty. "Justice," he proclaims, "is the rhyme of things." The phrase is perhaps a happy one; but the facile Optimism, which asserts that the bad rhymes are proper parts of the poem, is liable to the same abuse as the Antinomianism of other mystics; for to most men the temptations of life are too strong to be resisted by the belief that, in yielding to them, we "waive a little of our claim" to a more dignified position in the Universe. In some passages, however, he guards himself more carefully; and, in transferring his theory from the individual to the larger historic scale, it appears, as does the correlative doctrine of the identity of Might and Right, in a less objectionable form. In assert-

ing that "the lesson of life is practically to believe what the years and the centuries say against the hours," that "through evil agents, through toys and atoms, a great and beneficent tendency irresistibly streams;" that we should "learn to look for the permanent in the mutable and fleeting, and bear the disappearance of things we were wont to reverence without losing our reverence," he only announces a Faith which "is large in time, and that which shapes it to some perfect end." But his Optimism, as that of other theorists, is either, like ancient Utilitarianism, untrue to nature, or, like modern Utilitarianism, hardly consistent with itself.

The question regarding the relations of good and evil leads us from the consideration of Mr. Emerson's more purely Metaphysical to his Ethical views. In this instance, as in the former, we shall be more careful to represent correctly than to criticise. Our author is content to state, in broad terms, the two sides of the antinomy of Necessity and Free-will which lies at the basis of Moral Philosophy. Fate is with him, in many passages, another name for Nature. "The book of Nature is the book of Fate; she turns the gigantic pages leaf after leaf, never returning one." From this point of view he uses the language, sometimes of the believers in an external constraining Destiny, a "terrific Providence," sometimes of Determinism both in the form in which Mr. Mill rejects, and in the form in which he accepts, it. Emerson's intuitions are clear, but his logic is cloudy: he seldom allows himself to be pinned down to a definite belief. "The slippery Proteus" evades even the law of contradiction; and, passing, through a series of glittering paradoxes, from one Ontological peak to another, he escapes the drier if more decisive discussions on the plains of psychology. In one part of his work he admits that "organisation tyrannises over character;" that "men are what their mothers made them;" and dwells on the limitations of circumstance: in another, he asserts that these limitations become

thinner as the soul ascends; that Fate has its lord; that Power is, in the dual world, a fact equally real with Law; that "intellect annuls Fate," which is "a name for facts not yet passed under the fire of thought, for causes which are unpenetrated;" that "the one serious and formidable thing in nature is a strong will;" and that "Life, in the direct ratio of its amount, is Freedom." Those sentences are nowhere reconciled with each other; unless we accept the statements that "Freedom is necessary," "a part of Fate is the Free-will of man," as a reconcilement; nor are the latter set reconcilable with the mystical side of our author's philosophy. If, as he declares, "History is the action and reaction of Nature and Thought—two boys pushing each other on the curb-stone"—what becomes of the identity of subject and object in a single nature? The controversy between Liberty and Necessity cannot be resolved, according to the favourite method of modern harmonisers, into a difference of degree; for, behind the ambiguity of words, there is a real difference of opinion. Making every allowance for the force of circumstances, the question remains,—Is there any point at which absolute responsibility and power of choice begins? The moral argument concludes for the affirmative, the purely physical for the negative; but the physical is supplemented by the psychological, and the result depends on the possibility or impossibility of identifying the Will with the Desires. This aspect of the problem, Mr. Emerson scarcely contemplates. But, however unsatisfactory his solution, we accept the fact that he believes in both Fate and Free-will, as an index of the larger fact that Mysticism in America is inevitably and materially modified by Industrialism, that the Pantheistic tendency deprecated by De Tocqueville, is opposed and checked by a strong Individualism, by the feeling that without distinct centres of Will and Intelligence there is no true Personality. The nations of the North and West have

accepted necessitarian theories with the proviso that they shall be active and not passive agents. "Let us," says the poet, "build temples to the Beautiful Necessity which secures that all is made of one piece, which makes man brave in believing that he cannot shun a danger that is appointed, nor incur one that is not:" on the other hand, "we are not the less compelled to affirm liberty, the significance of the individual, the grandeur of duty and the power of character." "'Tis the best use of Fate to teach a fatal courage." As a practical moralist, Emerson abandons Spinoza and follows Kant. Ranging himself almost unreservedly on the side of Freedom, he speaks of man as autonomic, as the lord of circumstance, the maker of his character and the master of his fate. When he condescends to details, he is eminently realistic. His essays on "Wealth," "Culture," "Behaviour," "Power," exhibit, in their judicious balance of conflicting claims, the quintessence of common-sense. They all contain admirable rules for the conduct of life; inculcating prudence, suspicion of deceptions, address and tact in dealing with our fellows; appreciating success and geniality, the loss of which he holds to be a price too dear for the best performance; recommending economy, activity in commerce, concentration of effort, purposes well defined and consistently carried out. Woven of two curiously-intersecting threads, they present us with a unique conjunction of shrewdness and idealism. Their author has been termed "a Plotinus-Montaigne;" and one of his admirers has not unfairly attributed to him

> "A Greek head on right Yankee shoulders, whose range
> Has Olympus for one pole, for th' other the Exchange."

There never was a mystic with so much of the spirit of the good farmer, the inventor, or the enterprising merchant. In his practical mood he disclaims "the lofty language in which Plato and the Platonists speak of all who are not devoted to their shining abstractions," and, like Bacon, would bring down

Astronomy and the other sciences from heaven to earth. Yet the work in which this vein of thought is most conspicuous ends with the chapter on "Illusions," where he tells us that the affairs of every day are shadows after all, that, behind the veil of clouds and smoke, the gods are still sitting on their thrones, alone with the solitary and inviolable soul. When he has to deal with the means of life, he is an active and discriminating man of the world: when he comes to treat of its ultimate ends, the scene shifts, and we have again the mystical Idealist. His combination of stern practical rectitude with an ideal standard is Mr. Emerson's point of contact with Puritanism. A chivalric nobility, in which beauty and goodness are blended, is at once the goal, the sanction, and the motive of his ethical system. In the verdict of an elevated conscience, which accepts it as such, he reposes an implicit trust. "The final solution, in which scepticism is lost, is the moral sentiment which never forfeits its supremacy. This is the drop which balances the sea." It is, at all events, our author's firmest anchorage, and he holds by it with a tenacity that never condescends to encounter the historical difficulties in his way. Praise of virtue, transcending prudence and disdaining consequences, is the refrain of his moral monologue. His belief in an absolute morality, and the rigid ethical criterion which he applies to men and things, are his connecting links with the old faith of New England. His severe censure of Goethe's artistic indifferentism, recalls the age when the Bible and theological commentaries were regarded as the sum of honest literature. He writes of our great dramatist in the spirit of the men who closed the theatres, "He was master of the revels to mankind. It must go into the world's history that the best poet led an obscure and profane life, using his genius for the public amusement"—sentiments far removed from the spirit of the modern art-worship, or even from the broader view which

accepts the facts of life without seeking to probe its secrets. But the sentences which follow, protesting against the opposite extremes of austerity, indicate another divergence. While Mr. Emerson is puritanic in the moral earnestness of his character and his criticisms, his own conception of the ultimate basis of morality is far removed from that of the Puritans.

The cardinal difference between all ancient and most modern ethical systems is the comparative Exclusiveness of the one, the Universality of the other. The Platonic virtues in their highest form can only be understood or fully practised by the golden race, who minister in the temple of his Hellenic state. The Aristotelean magnanimity and magnificence belong of right to a well-educated Athenian citizen. Stoicism was, in some respects, a bridge between the two eras. It broke down the walls of rank and wealth and race, and made morality, in a more modern sense, the chief end of man. But it was still fenced with intellectual pride, and the capacity of interpreting its precepts was confined to a new aristocracy of character. The ambiguity of the maxim, "Follow Nature"—a maxim which Mr. Emerson emphatically endorses—proved fatal to its wide extension. Ancient morality was more or less artistic: it regarded a perfect life as the blooming of natural excellences, rarely as obedience to a law, and dwelt on the right or wrong of the action rather than on the merit or demerit of the actor. Christianity, in giving prominence to the latter conceptions, in associating the ideas of duty and self-sacrifice with motives generally realisable, added to ethics the side which is most capable of being brought to bear on the mass of men. It first announced a Heaven willing to stoop to feeble virtue: it first insisted on the obligation of the strong to succour the weak; and addressing itself, not to contemplate, but to aid, "the weary strife of frail humanity," it first appreciated the difficulty of living well. Novalis says

truly that "the summons to the good-will of all has made the fortune of the faith which recognises Grief and Self-abnegation." Mr. Mill, in his *Liberty*, asserts with no less truth that there is much still to be learned from the highest Pagan ethics; their positive ideals may be profitably opposed to the negations of mere abstinence; their public spirit to a pseudo-religious selfishness; their freshness to the over-refinements of modern casuistry. There are no nobler sentences than are to be found in the pages of Marcus Aurelius on the grace of those inherent virtues by which a man utters goodness as the mint utters coin, or "as a vine produces grapes." This aspect of morality is what we have everywhere presented to us in Mr. Emerson's essays. He prefers a constitutionally-noble nature, acting, ἀφ' ἕξεως, without forethought, to the Self-conquest that is the result of an internal combat; the "beautiful disdain" that recoils from evil as from ugliness to the sainthood that subdues "the world, the flesh, and the devil." "We love characters," he says, "in proportion as they are impulsive and spontaneous. Timoleon's victories are the best, which ran and flowed like Homer's verse." He reveres the individual grandeur of Plutarch's heroes, who are "natural powers like light and heat." With Carlyle, and more consistently, he decries Self-consciousness, too much analysis, too careful calculation. "The knots that tangle human creeds" are to him "the soul's mumps and measles and hooping-coughs." Shelley,[1] whom he often recalls, speaks for him in saying, "I have confidence in my moral sense alone, for that is a kind of originality." His pattern character needs no reminders of the law of duty. "Unchartered freedom" never tires him, nor does he feel "chance desires" as a weight. He "lives by pulses, forgets usages, and makes the moment great." Emerson has the

[1] Though Emerson never refers to Shelley, save with the most absurd depreciation.

tenacity of the Puritan, but he hates Puritanic glooms, "dungeons in the air," as he hates sick people, who "pollute the morning with corruption and groans." "We should study rather to make humanity beautiful to each other." "Wisdom is cheerful, *aliis lætus sapiens sibi*." "Depression of spirits developes the plague."

Plato, in the Republic, draws a distinction between the doctors of the body and those of the soul, saying that the former should know disease by experience, the latter should only know vice by observation: but some sympathy with temptation, even to moral evil, enlarges the charity, and, if he has been victorious in the struggle, strengthens the power of the moralist. The *mens sana in corpore sano* of the American transcendentalist has little of this sympathy: vice is to him a sign of bad blood, a flaw in the grain. To a properly-constituted being, he holds that a fairly moral life should be easy. "A few strong instincts and a few plain rules suffice." His penal clause is moral blindness. If we are slaves to sense we cease to see the claws of the siren. His reward is a deeper insight, his aim, *ἐφ' ὅσον ἐνδέχεται ἀθανατάζειν*, his rule of life, *self-reliance*. "The man that stands by himself the universe stands by him also." "Never imitate. That which a man can do best none but his Maker can teach him." "To believe in your own thought, that is genius." "Shy thou not hell, and trust thou well heaven is secure," are sentences which might have been uttered by the proudest of the Stoics, and graved among the illustrations of their porch. The following perfectly reproduce the aristocratic *noli-me-tangere* morality of Greece and Rome:—

"We should meet each morning as from foreign countries, and, spending the day together, should depart at night as into foreign countries. In all things I would have the island of a man inviolate. Let us sit apart as the gods talking from peak to peak all round Olympus." "Looking where others look, and conversing with the same things, we

catch the charm which lured them. Napoleon said you must not fight too often with one enemy, or you will teach him all your art of war." "We are either glad or sorry at a gift, and both emotions are unbecoming. You cannot give anything to a magnanimous person. After you have served him, he at once puts you in debt"—ἀντευεργετικὸς πλείονων. The new worship of this old magnanimity must be celebrated in "the church of men to come, without shawms or sackbuts or psaltery; but it will have heaven and earth for its beams and rafters; science for symbol and illustration; it will fast enough gather beauty, music, picture, poetry. Was never stoicism so stern and exigent as this shall be. It shall send man home to his central solitude, shame these social supplicating manners, and make him know that, much of the time, he must have himself to his friend. He shall expect no co-operation, he shall walk with no companion. The nameless Thought, the nameless Power, the superpersonal Heart, he shall repose alone on that. He needs only his own verdict. No good fame can help, no bad fame can hurt him. The Laws are his consolers; the good Laws themselves are alive; they know if he have kept them; they animate him with the teaching of great duty and an endless horizon."

To enlist popular feeling against this morality as inadequate, or to denounce the vagueness of this new religion, would be, in the eyes of the transcendentalist, a mere rhetorical appeal to the prejudices of that very ignorance above which he claims to have raised himself. Let us therefore waive for the present all considerations due to authority: let us concede that to him such an ideal life may be a self-sufficient end, and even grant that his faith may be the future philosophic creed; we are yet thrown back on the old exclusiveness, and are in danger of reverting to the egotism that vaunteth itself on its triumph over the world. Christianity, it has been said, differs from the highest Pagan wisdom not so much by enlarging the list of virtues as in "lighting up morality" with an inspiration in which all mankind may be partakers. Mr. Emerson thinks he has supplied to Stoicism the enthusiasm that it lacked, by the element of mysticism which he has added, and given it a broader basis by his sympathy with the industrialism of a democratic age. But the gulf between the remote idealism which crowns and the practical activities which underlie the whole is [redacted] bridged in his philosophy.

The eastern and mediæval mystics commonly regarded human life by itself as an evil from which they were to escape, the one into unconscious identification with the universe, the other into the love of a personal God. The last words regarding human destiny, uttered by the expiring classic schools are the expression of a doubtful hope. "It is pleasant to die if there be gods; and sad to live if there be none." "As far," says our author, "as it is a question of fact respecting the government of the universe this sums the whole." But he scarcely accepts the latter half of the dilemma in the sense in which it was intended: in his writings there is no trace of the profound melancholy which we find in Tacitus and the later Roman Stoics; life, as it appears to him, is in itself a good; his belief in the gods, as far as human existence is concerned, resolves itself into a confident expectation of indefinite progress, and a reliance, in the meanwhile, on the principle of Compensation. But this principle, by which he endeavours to surmount the difficulties involved in his Optimism, often fails to meet particular cases. The proposition that every individual loss is recompensed by an individual gain, is, as far as this life goes, untrue. Job does not always recover his sons and daughters. The fact that what one loses another gains, does not justify the ways of Providence to the sufferer. A severe Stoical nature that can accept the saying, "Of progressive souls all loves and friendships are momentary," which is pure to the excess of being frigid, and almost repellant in its isolation, escapes from half the pain and struggle of life, but "the passionate heart of the poet" knows more of the wants of mankind. The author of *Companions of my Solitude*, whose calm judgments are ever softened by sympathy, has put the case more truly in a striking sentence:—"Living as we do in the midst of stern gigantic laws, which crush everything down that comes in their way, which know no excuses, admit of no small errors, never send a man back to learn his

lesson and try him again; living with such powers about us (unseen, too, for the most part), it does seem as if the faculties of man were hardly as yet adequate to his situation here. Such considerations tend to charity and humility; and they point also to the existence of a future state." Charity, in its wide sense, and Humility are the two Christian virtues which the Pagan world had least knowlege of: they are virtually, though not by name, excluded from all the more recent systems which, both for good and evil, revive the Pagan spirit; from Greek Art-worship, and Gothic Force-worship, the pursuit of "Geist," and Transcendentalism. For a definite belief in a Future State, Mr. Emerson substitutes the conception of our relationship with the whole chain of things, our share in the march of the mighty Laws. "The knowledge that we traverse the whole scale of being, from the centre to the poles of nature, and have some stake in every possibility, lends that sublime lustre to death which philosophy and religion have too outwardly and literally striven to express in the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul." It cannot be denied that the popular views of another world are apt to be materialistic. The Homeric Hades which Plato desired to erase, and Lucretius afterwards so grandly dismissed, was better calculated to terrify weak, than to stimulate strong, natures. In later times mythological conceptions of future reward and punishment, like those dwelt upon by the morbid fancy of Shakespeare's Claudio, have often prevailed, and ridiculous ideas of immortality have been eagerly embraced by the sceptical credulity of a misnamed "Spiritualism." The higher Mysticism of all ages has done good service in protesting against the projected selfishness, which only drives a better bargain for its virtue, because it sees a little farther than the selfishness of the Epicurean. On the other hand, when we refine too much upon the belief in a future existence, when we reduce it to the impersonal perpetuity of the pure reason allowed by

Aristotle, by Spinoza, and by Emerson, we deprive it of its meaning and value as a general motive. That it is possible not only to exist, but to lead a noble life on the stern conditions of their creed, the names of those philosophers and some of the most lustrous pages of classic biography amply demonstrate. The near approach to identity in the practical precepts of Buddhism, of Christianity, and of modern Pantheism, establish the existence of Ethical standards independent of and compatible with all forms of belief. Warriors and patriots have always been found to die τοῦ καλοῦ ἕνεκα. The man of leisure and far-ranging thought, in the ancient world, might find consolation for the violence done to affections, seldom very keen, in speculation and the belief that in a vague sense he was θεοφιλέστατος. The modern sceptical physicist may reflect that he will be remembered as having done something to advance the knowledge of those majestic sequences which will continue to uphold the universe when he "is blown about the desert dust or sealed within the iron hills." The highly-educated Comtist may claim a more disinterested satisfaction in his philanthropic faith, that while "the individual withers the race grows more and more." The Transcendentalist, like the Quietist, has his moments of exaltation, his elevated ἐνέργεια, or glow of enthusiasm, in the sense of his communion with the soul that breathes "through all this mystic frame," but his theory seems devised for a world from which want and misery and shame have been cancelled, where there is a fair field and free air and men ἀκηδέα θυμὸν ἔχοντες. But to the million it is a scornful sentence: they feel disinherited of all inducements to live better than the contemporaries of Seneca: they ask for bread; it offers a string of pearls:

> "It whispers of the glorious gods
> And leaves us in the mire."

CHAPTER IX.

EMERSON'S STYLE, POETRY, AND CRITICISM—THOREAU.

EMERSON has been, to weariness, compared with Carlyle, in some respects justly; but the contrasts between them are more instructive. They have in common a revolutionary spirit, a marked originality, an uncompromising aversion to decorous illusions, a disdain of traditional thought and stereotyped modes of expression: but in Carlyle this is tempered by respect for persons and a veneration for the Past, in which he holds out models for our imitation; while Emerson sees in its great men and events only finger-posts for the future, and is perpetually warning his readers to stay at home, lest they should travel away from themselves. The one, always a careful, though sometimes a perverse, historian, loves detail and hates abstractions. He delights to dilate on the minutiæ of biography, and waxes eloquent even upon dates. The other, a brilliant, though not always a profound, generaliser, tells us that we must "leave a too close and lingering adherence to facts, and study the sentiment as it appeared in hope, not in history." "Everything," he writes, "is beautiful, seen from the point of the intellect or as truth, but all is sour if seen as Experience. Details are melancholy; the plan is seemly and noble. In the actual world—the painful kingdom of time and place—dwell care and canker and fear. With thought, with the ideal, is immortal hilarity, the rose of joy: round it all the Muses sing; but grief cleaves to names and persons, and the partial interests of to-day and yesterday."

Neither of these writers has the "dry light:" both exaggerate; but in different directions. The one dwells on the shadows of life; which, from his point of view, is hardly worth living. He is like a man bearing a burden, and bending over the riddle of the earth; till, when he looks up at the firmament of the unanswering stars, he can but exclaim, "It is a sad sight." The other is invigorated by the fresh breezes of the New World: his vision ranges freely over her clear horizons, and he leaps up elastic under her light atmosphere, exclaiming, "Give me health and a day, and I will make the pomp of emperors ridiculous." Carlyle is a half-Germanised Scotchman, living near the roar of our great metropolis, with memories of Goethe on the one hand, of the gray hills of the Covenant on the other. He is at bottom a Calvinist, with a coating of Weimar varnish. Emerson is a half-Grecized American, studying Swedenborg and the Phædo in his garden, far enough from the din of cities to enable him, "in seasons of calm weather," to forget their existence. "Boston, London, are as fugitive as any whiff of smoke; so is society, so is the world." In the chapter of *Sartor Resartus* entitled "Natural Supernaturalism" we have the same feeling of the dream-like character of the shows of things; but this mood of mind, transient in the one writer, prevails with the other. In most practical matters the one is strong where the other is weak. Mr. Emerson seems to have bought his experience cheaply. "Totus teres atque rotundus" at second hand, he writes poorly of the passions, whose gusts he has never felt. His Essay on Love is the description of a beautiful rainbow, not of a mastering power. His own instincts are innocent; and we might have predicted that his rules of life would be misapplied, as they have been, by grosser natures. His *Threnody* and *Dirge* are indications of his having passed through the "valley of the shadow;" but he has encountered no Apollyons, and assumes himself in the Celestial City, without having

crossed the dark river. His moral theories are less sound, *i.e.* less applicable to real life than Carlyle's, in the same proportion, and for the same reason, that Shelley's were less applicable than Wordsworth's. Of the two, Carlyle alone recognises the truth that underlies all the formulæ about human corruption: acknowledging the necessity of a Law of Duty with definite sanctions, he takes for his watch-word the Christian self-sacrifice in place of the Pagan self-reliance.

The artistic qualities of these writers are even more strongly contrasted. The charm of Mr. Emerson's style, at its best, lies in its precision and ease. He draws flowing outlines like Flaxman, graceful and clear, but colourless. His temple is a modern Parthenon. Carlyle seems to struggle, like Michael Angelo, with masses of rock: his church, like his creed, is Gothic: his thoughts are often fragmentary, sometimes grotesque; but he never offends us by the complacency of the American epigrammatist, and he redeems his incompleteness by the humour with which he acknowledges it. His power of expression has increased with years; but after passing the Everlasting No, and arriving at the Everlasting Yea, he has completed the circle, and gone back to the "Iceland of Negations." With all his profounder sympathies, he takes his stand as a retrograde politician, and advocates a purely ideal despotism. Mr. Emerson here shines by comparison. Whatever his faith in the Invisible may be, he holds it without faltering. In condemning the hurry and noise of mobs he keeps his temper, and, resting on justice, never cries for vengeance. "Their politic at the best is trick" is his severe expression in a season of national folly; but wars and revolutions take nothing from his internal tranquillity: amid the strife of parties, to none of which he belongs, he preserves the "pure intellectual gleam," and sets off Swedenborg and Montaigne against Prudhon and Louis

Blanc, Hafiz and Shakespeare against Luther and Fox. With whatever loss of that consistency which he stigmatises as the "hobgoblin of little minds," he balances his aristocratic reserve with strong democratic tendencies, and has confidence in progression by antagonism. His own career has been progressive in the direction of actual life. "Society and politics," says Mr. Lowell, "which are main elements to strength, have drawn Emerson steadily manward and outward." He dwells apart from factions; yet at every crisis of his country's history he leaves his "intellectual throne" to say in fewest words the aptest and truest things as the spokesman of a practical liberty. Through good and bad report, amid the regrets and reproaches of many of his transcendental admirers, he stood by the Abolitionists from the time when Garrison set his first types to the close of the war of emancipation. It was he who wrote, in 1857, in reproach of the unfulfilled Declaration of Independence—

"United States! the ages plead
Present and Past in under song;
Go put your creed into your deed,
Nor speak with double tongue."

Ending his exhortation with the emphatic verse—

"For he that worketh high and wise,
Nor pauses in his plan,
Will take the sun out of the skies
Ere freedom out of man."

It was he who said that the execution of old John Brown consecrated the gallows; it was he who pronounced the noblest of the eulogies on Lincoln. Mr. Trollope tells us that, when he expected to find "the star-spangled banner wrapped in a mist of Platonism," in a lecture delivered in 1863, Mr. Emerson amazed him by the practical force of his patriotism. These verses of his *Boston Hymn*, of the same date, are both poetical and philanthropic—

"Pay ransom to the owner
And fill the bag to the brim;
Who is the owner? The slave is owner,
And ever was. Pay him.

"O North! give him beauty for rags,
And honour, O South, for his shame;
Nevada, coin thy golden crags,
With Freedom's image and name."

Mr. Emerson has nowhere given us in any definite detail his views on Politics. His essay of that name accepts the position, first upheld by Aristotle and popularised by Lord Macaulay, that different forms of government are adapted to different social conditions; but it shows that the tendency of modern times, attaching more weight to the equality of persons and less to the inequalities of property, is steadily pointing towards democracy. Hesitating between his admiration for the best men, and his wish for the greatest happiness of the greatest number, he finally casts, in all disputed questions, his vote for the more generous policy. He approves of free-trade, a wide suffrage, a national education, a popular literature, a mild penal code, an open competition for honours and offices. A philosophic Republican, he sees the dangers incident to a society without gradations of rank; while he confides in the stability of the fundamental human nature on which it relies, and endorses the saying of an old American author, that "a Monarchy is a merchantman which sails well, but will sometimes strike on a rock and go to the bottom; whilst a Republic is a raft which would never sink, but then your feet are always in water." Taking part with the individual against the State, which "must follow and not lead the character and progress of the citizen," he yet believes in collective wisdom as the limit to collective folly; and, contending that the State exists for its members, thinks that (if each be true to his convictions) they can act best in unison

when all are subject to the fewest external restraints. The enervating influences of authority, and the "monotonous sweetness of custom," he holds to be least powerful in popular governments; and maintains that the tyranny of a public opinion not enforced by law need only be endured by voluntary slaves. While censuring Conservatism as timid, he admits that pure Radicalism is destructive and aimless; and hopes for a new social and industrial Stoicism, softened and made gracious by a love of beauty and benevolence, to reconcile order with liberty.

Mr. Emerson is, perhaps, most widely known in this country by his *Representative Men*—by no means the most satisfactory of his works. A series of generally acute criticisms, pervaded by no well-marked ethical idea, it leaves on the mind a somewhat indefinite impression. Its categories are not exhaustive, and it is difficult to determine on what principle they are chosen; but it serves as an interesting point of comparison with the corresponding lectures of the great English advocate of Hero-worship, to the suggestions of which it probably owes its existence. Mr. Carlyle, whose whole faith is centred in strong individualities, adopts the view of history which practically resolves it into a series of biographies. Mr. Buckle, caring little for persons and confiding rather in general laws, resolves biography into history. Mr. Emerson, on this question, steers a middle course. He believes in great men, "to educate whom the State exists, with the appearance of whom the State expires;" but he regards them as inspired mouthpieces of universal or national ideas rather than as controlling forces. Their mission is not so much to regulate our action as to "fortify our hopes." Possessed of a larger share of the "Over-Soul," which "makes the whole world kin," they apprehend and explain phenomena which have hitherto passed unheeded; but their indirect services are the best. Their examples, more weighty than their

acts or discoveries, are perpetual encouragements. The great man is an encyclopædia of fact and thought: the belief born in his brain spreads like a current over humanity, and he becomes for a time the key to the ill-defined ideal of the multitude. But his career should rouse us to a like assertion of our liberties: we ought not to obey, but to follow, sometimes by not obeying him. Without him the world would be thrust back under the dominion of the artificial laws, which he has taught us to transcend. It is imbecility, not wisdom, that "is always inviting the impudence of power." It is obvious that this view is in essential antagonism to Mr. Carlyle's. His heroes are men with divine mandates, which they have to impress and enforce upon their fellows. Perpetually chanting the Challenge of Thor, he cares nothing for speculative genius, and concentrates his admiration on men of action, and force — Odin, Mahomet, Dante, Luther, Johnson, Cromwell. Mr. Emerson loves the greatness which has its grace by nature, and "lives in a sphere of thought which others get at with difficulty." To force, which reigns in a barbaric age, and owes its value to the vices of society, he prefers beauty, rounded outline, and mental grasp. In his philosopher, sceptic, mystic, poet, and man of letters—Plato, Montaigne, Swedenborg, Shakespeare, and Goethe—he sees various imperfect approximations to his model thinker. It has been complained that Buonaparte is Mr. Emerson's only type of a man of action, and not one of the highest. The fact illustrates the bent of the critic's own mind: he respects capacity of every kind; but subordinates saints and statesmen alike to the sage who does for truth what the artist does for beauty. Yet he holds, with a laudable inconsistency, that the solution of the problems of life should be in existence, not in a book: his virtue is never fugitive; it comes out and fights for liberty. In leaving *Representative Men*, let us select three of

the author's most striking characterisations, remarkable alike for terseness and accuracy.

"What a force was coiled up in the skull of *Napoleon!* He is thoroughly modern, and at the highest point of his fortunes has the very spirit of the newspapers. He came unto his own, and they received him. He is never weak and literary, but acts with the solidity and the precision of natural agents. He risked everything and spared nothing, neither ammunition, nor money, nor troops, nor generals, nor himself. . . . A Jupiter Scapin, he did all that in him lay to live without moral principle.

"*Goethe* was the soul of his century, the philosopher of the multiplicity of human life, hundred-handed, argus-eyed, able and happy to cope with this rolling miscellany of facts and sciences. . . . He draws his rents from rage and pain. By acting rashly he buys the power of talking wisely. Vexations and a tempest of passion only fill his sails as the good Luther writes, 'When I am angry I can pray well and preach well.' . . . He lays a ray of light under every fact and between himself and his dearest property. From him nothing was hid, nothing withholden. The lurking demons sat to him, and the saint who saw the demons, and the metaphysical elements took form. The old Eternal Genius who built the world has confided himself more to this man than to any other. . . . But there are nobler strains in poetry than any he has sounded. There are writers poorer in talent whose tone is purer and more touches the heart. Goethe can never be dear to men.

"*Shakspeare* is as much out of the category of eminent authors as he is out of the crowd. He is inconceivably wise: the others conceivably. A good reader can in a sort nestle into Plato's brain and think from thence; but not into Shakspeare's. He is still out of doors."

As regards form, Mr. Emerson is the most unsystematic of writers. The concentration of his style resembles that of a classic; but he has little constructiveness, and, as with others who have adopted the aphoristic mode of conveying their thoughts, he everywhere sacrifices unity to richness of detail. His Essays are bundles of loose ideas tacked together only by a common title—handfuls of scraps laid by singly, taken out in a mass, and tossed down before his audience, like the miscellaneous contents of a conjuror's hat. He delights in proverbs and quotations, which are in general marvellously apt; but his accuracy is often at fault, and in his tendency to

exaggeration he is an American of the Americans. He loves a contradiction for its own sake, and always prefers a surprise to an argument. His epigrams are a series of electric shocks, and though no one is more prevailingly sincere, it is sometimes hard to say whether or not he is wholly in earnest, for a vein of soft Irony, his only manifestation of Humour, seems to underlie many of his most *prononcé* passages. His habit is to paint, in the strongest colours, the opposite sides of the antinomies of life, leaving it to his reader to strike the balance. Among highly-educated English writers at the present day, the most frequent defect is indecision: oppressed by the fear of critics, and almost bewildered by their own many-sided knowledge, they hover about their subjects as if reluctant to grapple with them, and where we are most anxious to hear their answers give the most uncertain sounds. Cautious reservations smother their best judgments: they look round and through the truth rather than at it; devotees of good taste, a mental cramp is apt to clip and curtail their style. Mr. Emerson's error is towards the opposite extreme: he sacrifices everything to directness and decision, objects to "but" and "however," and maintains that "two words, yes and no, are enough." Following his own advice, he "rolls out his paradoxes in solid column with not the infirmity of a doubt," and with an air of unconscious simplicity, as if he were soliloquising. The charm of a grace without grandeur, a terse refinement of phrase, trenchant and subtile illustrations, are among his main attractions. Speaking of our agriculture in the *English Traits*, he remarks: "England is a garden, under an ash-coloured sky; the fields have been rolled and combed till they appear to have been finished with a pencil instead of a plough." This criticism has been applied to his own sentences. The ideas they embody are on the scale of a continent; in form, they are adapted for a cabinet of curiosities. They are sweeping generalisations given in essences.

Short and penetrating, though irregularly arranged, they are like gold nails struck into a temple-wall apparently at random: the pattern is an enigma to the uninitiated. Of these pithy, semi-oracular *mots*—which do not lose so much as they ought to do by being detached from their setting—we may select a few characteristic examples. "Other men are lenses through which we read our own minds." "The great man is he who in the midst of the crowd keeps, with perfect sweetness, the independence of solitude." "We grant that human life is mean, but how did we find out that it was mean?" "What is the universal sense of want and ignorance but the fine innuendo by which the soul makes its enormous claim?" "Always do what you are afraid to do." "Steep and craggy, said Porphyry, is the path of the gods: open your Marcus Antoninus." "The highest price you can pay for a thing is to ask it." "A just thinker will allow full swing to his scepticism." "I dip my pen into the blackest ink, because I am not afraid of falling into my ink-pot." "The English have a tortoise's instinct to hold hard to the ground with his claws, lest he should be thrown on his back." "I sometimes meet the city of Lacedæmon in a clergyman's eye." "A fly is as untamable as a hyena." "Every man is a consumer, and ought to be a producer."

Mr. Emerson's most elaborate criticisms are mainly composed of the same mosaic work, and in the long run we get tired of these perpetual jerks. His style, all armed with points and antitheses, like the bristles of a hedgehog, lacks repose. It reminds us too frequently of the frisking movements of a ballet dancer, and his attitudes are not always graceful in themselves. His allusions are sometimes far-fetched, and his general naturalness does not save him from occasional affectations and displays of pedantry. In coining words, as "Adamhood," "forelooking," "spicier," "specular," "plumule," "uncontinented," "metope," "intimater"

"antipode," "partialist," he is far from felicitous. Minute critics will find that his disdain of rule extends to a contempt of some of the rules of grammar, as in his employment of such a form as "shined" and his continual use of "shall" for "will." A more serious defect is his misapplication of terms, as when he speaks of "the strong, *self-complacent* Luther," and the want of taste, dignity, or moderation in such expressions as the following:—"Truth is such a fly-away, such an untransportable and *unbarreable* a commodity that it is *as bad to catch* as light." "The beauty that shimmers in the yellow afternoons of October, who could ever *clutch* it?" "The fathomless powers of gravity and chemistry, and over them of life *pre-existing* within us in their highest form" (why pre-existing?). "Napoleon when *spying* the Alps by a sunset on the Sicilian sea." "The world-spirit is a good swimmer . . . he *snaps his finger* at laws." "Every hero becomes a bore at last. . . . It seems as if the Deity dressed each soul which he sent into nature in certain virtues and powers not communicable, and wrote *not transferable* and *good for this trip only* on these garments of the soul." "Twenty-thousand thieves landed at Hastings, and founded the House of Lords." "Oxford is a Greek factory, as Wilton mills weave carpet and Sheffield grinds steel."

All these are more or less objectionable as violences done to good sense or decorum. They are emphatically "smart," and, like the graver irreverences which we shall have to notice hereafter, unworthy of the author, who is among the keenest to perceive and the foremost to censure the flippancy of his countrymen. Too much stress has been laid on such faults of manner by those who are hostile to his way of thinking; but it is incumbent on all who have to fight for the freedom of their thought to reduce to a minimum the eccentricities of their style. The greatest cause advocated by the greatest orator would fail of a hearing if the advocate were to plead for

it in his shirt-sleeves. As a counteractive to the impression produced by lapses, which are, after all, comparatively rare, let us quote a few sentences, worthy of Cicero or the Antonines, from the noble essay on Friendship—

"Our chief want in life is somebody who shall make us do what we can: such a one is a friend. . . . He is a person with whom I may be sincere. Before him I may think aloud. . . . I hate the prostitution of the name of friendship to signify modish and worldly alliances. I much prefer the company of ploughboys and tin-peddlars to a silken and perfumed amity. . . . Let me be alone to the end of the world rather than that my friend should overstep by a word or a look his real sympathy. Let him not cease an instant to be himself. . . . Better be a nettle in the side of your friend than his echo. . . . Should not the society of my friend be poetic, pure, universal and great as Nature itself? . . . Let him be to me a spirit. A message, a thought, a sincerity, a glance from him I want, but not news nor pottage. I can get politics and chat and neighbourly conveniences from cheaper companions. . . . Let the soul be assured that somewhere in the Universe it should rejoin its friend and it would be content and cheerful alone for a thousand years. . . . Our friendships hurry to short and poor conclusions, because we have made them a texture of wine and dreams instead of the tough fibre of the human heart. The laws of friendship are austere and eternal, of one web with the laws of nature and of morals. But we have aimed at a swift and petty benefit to suck a sudden sweetness. We snatch at the slowest fruit in the whole garden of God which many summers and many winters must ripen. . . . The only way to have a friend is to be one. . . . Only be admonished by what you already see, not to strike leagues of friendship with cheap persons. . . . It would indeed give me a certain household joy to quit this lofty seeking, this spiritual astronomy, or search of stars, and come down to warm sympathies with you; but then I know well I shall mourn always the vanishing of my mighty gods."

As an illustration of the author's earlier style and his power of idealising Nature, we have only space to refer to the often-quoted passage about beauty stealing in like air and enveloping the actions of Winkelreid and Columbus.

The freshness which breathes through Mr. Emerson's essays reappears in his poetry; but his verses are seldom so successful as his prose. Apart from the obscurity of their matter, which is great; for he has chosen rhythm as the vehicle of his remoter fantasies, they are defaced by frequent mannerisms,

incongruities, and carelessness. Most of them are wanting in melody, many in syntax: the writer seems to trust to Providence for his rhymes, and changes his metres at will. Nevertheless, in both the volumes of his poetry there are poems. His genius has a lyric side, and the imaginative sympathy with nature and men like himself, which makes his prose poetical, prevents his verse, even when awkward, from becoming prosaic. The rippling of rivers, the sough of the pine, the murmur of the harvest, and the whir of insects, pervade and give life to his descriptions. A morning light is thrown over his happiest pages. He sings like Shelley of the stars and the earth: the delicate touches in some of his quieter reflective pictures are not unworthy of the author of the *Excursion*. All men occasionally become either dull or ridiculous: Mr. Emerson avoids the first; he is guilty of repetition, but seldom of diffuseness, and though sometimes verging on absurdity, he steers clear of platitude. These poems reveal him on another side generally concealed from us—that which has to do with home affections. Interleaved between the gold-dust drifts of Alexandrian and Persian mysticism, there are pieces that speak of a love that is neither "initial," "demoniac," nor "celestial," but human, and the consciousness of a common share in common joys and griefs. Of these the *Dirge*, *In Memoriam*, the *Farewell*, the lines to *J. W.*, to *Ellen*, and the *Threnody*, are the most conspicuous. In the last the Idealist mourns over an irreparable loss, for which he finds but a partial consolation in his philosophy—

> "The eager fate which carried thee
> Took the largest part of me;
> For this losing is true dying,
> This is lordly man's down-lying,
> This his slow but sure reclining,
> Star by star his world resigning.
> . . . . . .

"O child of paradise,
Boy who made dear his father's home,
In whose deep eyes
Men read the welfare of the times to come,
I am too much bereft:
The world dishonoured thou hast left.
O truth's and nature's costly lie!
O trusted broken prophecy!
O richest fortune sourly crossed!
Born for the future, to the future lost."

But the prevailing tone of the more intelligible part of these volumes is cheerful. The *Woodnotes* which, under this and other names, occupy so much of their space, are those of the lark rather than the nightingale.

"Thousand minstrels woke within me,
Our music's in the hills,"

is the perpetual refrain of the exulting worshipper of Nature. Camping among the Adirondacs, welcoming the May, or putting his garden into song, he keeps his new American faith—

"When the forest shall mislead me,
When the night and morning lie,
When sea and land refuse to feed me,
'Twill be time enough to die:
Then will yet my mother yield
A pillow in her greenest field,
Nor the June flowers scorn to cover
The clay of her departed lover."

In the same strain—that of Quarles or Andrew Marvell at their best—is his well known *Good-bye, proud world, I'm going home;* but the Puritanism of older days has here taken on another shape. To counterbalance this hermit-like spirit, there are other pieces relating to the intercourse of men with each other, showing a keen observation of practical life, and weighing its gains and losses—sound worldly wisdom in neat quatrains, and a few trumpet calls of liberty. The Hymn sung at the completion of the Concord monument is thoroughly

patriotic, and at the same time strong and dignified; while the verses written immediately before and during the late war address the whole nation, in forcible terms both of warning and encouragement. Those practical manifestoes are the more striking from the fact that they are printed by the side of others proclaiming, in transcendental enigmas, the indifferentism of all transitory things, the fixity of Fate, and the doctrine of the absorption of the individual in the Infinite. Most readers of Mr. Emerson's earlier volume of verse have puzzled over *The Sphinx*. Let them endeavour to unravel the following lines from his *May-Day*, entitled *Brahma*:—

"If the red slayer think he slays,
Or if the slain think he is slain,
They know well the subtle ways
I keep and pass and turn again.

"Far or forgot to me is near;
Shadow and sunlight are the same;
The vanquished gods to me appear,
And one to me are shame and fame.

"They reckon ill who leave me out;
When me they fly I am the wings;
I am the doubter and the doubt,
And I the hymn the Brahmin sings.

"The strong gods pine for my abode,
And pine in vain the sacred seven;
But thou, meek lover of the good!
Find me, and turn thy back on heaven."

Almost everything our author has written is excellent in parts, but he has produced no consummate whole: we have in all his work spontaneity, sagacity, and vivacity, imperfectly harmonised with a love of abstraction.

The extracts we have given, within the limited compass of our review, sufficiently illustrate the fact that Mr. Emerson is singularly unequal as a Critic. For penetration, subtilty, and conclusiveness, some of his estimates of men and things

have never been surpassed. They are frequently most felicitous, at all times fresh and genuine, and expressed with a racy vigour, though, on some occasions, with an unpruned violence. On the other hand, this freshness is often purchased by a lack of knowledge. Hobbes confessed that he owed much of his originality to the restricted range of his reading. Emerson often owes his apparent force to the limitations of his thought. His eye is keen, but its range is comparatively narrow; and his deficiencies of vision are the more injurious that they generally escape his own observation. Unconsciously infected by the haste which he condemns in his countrymen, he looks at other nations through the folding telescope of a tourist. His *English Traits* abound in trenchant epigrams, but though they pay an amply generous tribute to English greatness, they miss—in many important particulars—the salient points both for good and evil of English character. The following sentence is surely misleading, as well as slightly confused. "The religion of England is part of good breeding. When *you* see on the Continent the well-dressed Englishman come into his ambassador's chapel, and put his face for silent prayer into his well-brushed hat, *one* cannot help feeling how much national pride prays with him and the religion of a gentleman." Mr. Emerson's taste is constantly at fault: an incessant straining after *bon-mots* mars his judgment as much as it vitiates his style; and his love of directness, pushed to an extreme, leads him over the confines of fact, as well as the reservations of fashion, into reckless caricature. A dogmatist, in spite of the impulsive inconsistencies which ought to be fatal to dogmatism, his judgments of those whose lives and writings do not square with his theories are for the most part valueless; and when he does injustice to his adversaries, his tacit assumption that all wise men must agree with him only adds to the offence. When, for instance, he asserts that "Locke is as surely the

influx of decomposition and prose as Bacon and the Platonists of growth," or declares that Mr. Wilkinson's prefaces to the translations of Swedenborg "throw all the contemporary philosophy of England into the shade," or says contemptuously of the sensational school, "'Tis of no importance what bats and oxen think," or writes of his converse with Landor, "He pestered me with Southey; but who is Southey?" he shows either ignorance or flippancy. His praise of Bacon, with whose method he has no real sympathy, seems to prove that he has never understood the position of the founder of inductive science. His own motto is rather *plus intra* than *plus ultra*, and his idea of Truth is not so much the correspondence of thought with things, or a knowledge of their forms, as the agreement of the mind with itself. He utterly rejects the *Idola Theatri*, but not unfrequently falls a prey to all the others. He seldom ventures on verbal criticism; and in dealing with foreign languages he betrays the weakness of his scholarship. Though he is a professed Platonist, his essay on Plato is, in some respects, his poorest. He seems to have read him in Mr. Bohn's translations, which he pronounces "excellent." One qualification for a good critic is a well-defined artistic standard, another is the dramatic capacity of placing himself for the time in the position of the person who is being criticised. Mr. Emerson has neither of these. In reviewing an author he seems to skim his works, and ask how far the results arrived at coincide with a preconceived idea. With the spirit of a fearless inquirer, he unfortunately blends so much presumption as to feel an absolute indifference regarding the opinions of others, and this, in excess, constitutes a moral as well as an artistic defect. Thought is free, and the expression of it ought to be so; but when our thought wanders very far from that of the majority of wise and good men, we are bound to watch it with more than ordinary care, to sift its conclusions, and at least to state them moderately. Mr. Emerson's

thought does wander far, and it runs fast: he does not know what moderation in expression means, and his almost childish love of contradiction perpetually, and often justly, provokes offence. In dealing with subjects, and in handling names commonly regarded as sacred, he delights in parading his independence; and, instead of endeavouring to conciliate, he rides rough-shod over the most cherished convictions of his fellow-men, or waives them aside with a complacent smile and a sort of divine impudence. Every claim of authority he receives as a challenge to his personal rights, and immediately decides to "believe the contrary." He never seems to have read the inscription on the third gate of Buzerane, "Be not too bold." Like King Cambyses, he stabs the bull Apis, in utter disregard of the historian's warning. His impatient *anticipationes naturæ* detract from his reliability in matters of detail, while by a similar carelessness he repeats and contradicts himself with equal frequency. His soundest judgments relate to the men around him, of whom he is at once the panegyrist and the censor. All that is weak and foolish in their mode of life he condemns; all that is noblest and most hopeful he applauds.

Mr. Emerson has left his mark on the century. To use a favourite phrase of his own, "he cannot be skipped." Even where his results are least satisfactory, his intense suggestiveness is the cause of thought in others; and, as one of the "genitic" powers of modern literature, his fertilising influence will survive his inconclusive speculations. His faults are manifest: a petulant irreverence, frequent superficiality, a rash bravery, an inadequate solution of difficulties deeming itself adequate, are among the chief. But he is original, natural, attractive, and direct, limpid in phrase and pure in fancy. His best eloquence flows as easily as a stream. In an era of excessive reticence and hypocrisy, he has no concealments. We never suspect him of withholding half of what he

knows, or of formularising for our satisfaction a belief which he does not sincerely hold. He is transparently honest and honourable: his courage has no limits. Isolated by force of character, there is no weakness in his solitude. He leads us into a region where we escape at once from deserts and from noisy cities; for he rises above without depreciating ordinary philanthropy, and his philosophy at least endeavours to meet our daily wants. In every social and political controversy he throws his weight into the scale of Justice, on the side of a rational and progressive liberty; and his lack of sympathy with merely personal emotions is recompensed by a veneration for the ideal of the race which recalls the beautiful sentiment of Malebranche—"When I touch a human hand I touch heaven." We admire his combination of comprehensiveness and concentration, of finesse and tenacity, of good sense and reverie, the cheerfulness of his scepticism, and the softness of his austerity.

Mr. Emerson's is the highest secular form of the Protestant, as M. Comte's is the highest secular form of the Catholic, faith. His religion of Nature at least teaches us to aspire to the noblest life, and assures us that every resisted temptation is a new source of strength. He has reanimated what is most enduring in Pagan, and borrowed, although it may be without due acknowledgment, a ray of inspiration from Christian Ethics. His love of Truth, for its own sake, is one of the rarest virtues in any age, and his idealism is a perpetual protest against the baser materialism of his own—a materialism, in the long run, far more formidable to religion than any erroneous metaphysics. His practical precepts are all heroic: however his system may be misapplied, he is himself preserved, by the purity of his intentions, from the worst dangers to which it is exposed. His exhortation "first, last, midst, and without end to honour every truth by use," is the sum of morality. His writings are bracing to the moral sense, a tonic to the will

as well as to the understanding. They recall the magnanimities of the Porch, the amenities of the Academy, and the fervour of the best Puritan models. No one can pass from their perusal to any meanness. Mr. Emerson will never be very popular in England, where his defects and merits are alike generally uncongenial. He alarms our Philistinism by the aggressive independence and strong counter currents of his thought; and repels our anti-Philistinism by his vehemence of expression. Our middle classes rally against him round the pillars of their Church and State. Of the refined minority, those who hesitate at heart between the Liberal creed and Ultramontane sympathies turn scornfully from his samplars of excellence to the *Acta Sanctorum*. Our apostles of Culture, intensifying his moral, repudiate his artistic, blemishes: they agree with him in theoretically despising plain facts and plain men; but, unlike him, they carry their theory into practice: Tyndall and Ruskin have confessed their obligations to Emerson's style; Mr. Arnold, who is obliged to no one, despises it. The later followers of Bentham, whom he has never fairly appreciated, recognise him only as an ill-informed adversary. Yet the time has come when well-educated Englishmen of all sects ought frankly to acknowledge the high qualities of a mind, on the whole the loftiest that the world of letters in New England has hitherto produced. In memory of these qualities, the thoughts of his countrymen will continue—with or without the sanction of foreigners—to revert with respect and gratitude to the old-fashioned village, straggling through the meadows, where the Assabeth unites with the Musketaquid to creep towards the sea, famous as the first battlefield of the Revolutionary war, and as the birthplace of American Transcendentalism.

Emerson's subsequent work has done little to alter any deliberate judgment formed about him fifteen years ago.[1]

[1] With a few excisions, and the addition of a paragraph on Margaret

His later writings have the same brilliancy, the same inconsistencies, the same occasional defects of over-statement on either side; here and there the same violences as his earlier. To the last he remains a preacher of self-reliance, scorning complaisance and conventionality, appraising a defiant courage. His optimism, condensed in the aphorism of doubtful truth, "Every sound ends in Music," is, if possible, more dogmatic. He wrote in youth, "The only reward of virtue is virtue:" in age he writes, "Virtue secures its own success." He keeps quoting the East, and relying on the West. His hardly reconcilable views on Freedom and Fate, Failure and Success, Solitude and Society, lie side by side. The one conspicuous difference is that he has almost deserted metaphysics for a lively interest in practical life, and the mere description of external nature for the study of man. In place of eloquent rhapsodies on the "Over-Soul," or "Circles," or "Nominalism and Realism," we have often almost worldly-wise disquisitions on "Oratory," "Domestic Life," "Clubs," "Resources," "Social Aims;" he leaves the forest to exalt "The Farmer" —"a slow person not tuned to city watches, but taking the pace of seasons, plants, and chemistry," and yet largely the master of city marriages and of national life. He cares less to soliloquise, and has all the love of talk that is often attributed to advancing years. His essays are no longer prose poems; but they are charming conversations. They teem with anecdote, and are constantly enlivened by the apt quotations of a wary reader with a retentive memory. There is nothing in Todd's *Student's Manual* more practical; certainly nothing so good as Emerson's advice on the choice of books. The following sentences, with notes correcting their

Fuller and Alcott, I have reprinted the foregoing part of this, and the whole of the previous, chapter from an Essay which appeared in the North British Review for December 1876, in the belief that the interpolation of afterthoughts would only destroy whatever unity it may possess.

occasional severity, might be framed and hung up in every study :—

"The three practical rules which I have to offer are—1. Never read any book that is not a year old. 2. Read no mean books. Shun the spawn of the press on the gossip of the hour. . . . Perhaps the world would be a gainer if all the secondary writers were lost—say in England all but Shakespeare, Milton, and Bacon. Never read any but famed books. 3. Never read any but what you like."

Here, as elsewhere, his generalisations are excellent; but he is apt when he comes to details, on which equally he assumes the authority of the law and the prophets, to make mistakes—*e.g.* the following has at least a show of arrogance :—"You shall" (*N.B.* his misuse of shall is no mere accident) "not read newspapers, nor politics, nor novels, nor Montaigne, nor the newest French book. You may read Plutarch, Plato, Plotinus, Hindoo mythology and ethics—read Hafiz and the Trouveurs, and (in your ear) Ossian." To this he adds the medley, "Aristophanes, J. A. St. John's *Greece*, Niebuhr's *Letters*, the useful Robertson, the Venerable Bede, and Sharon Turner." His special criticisms are still frequently amusing, *e.g.* "When people tell me they do not relish poetry and bring me Shelley or Aikin's poets, I am quite of their mind." "I find *Faust* a little too modern and intelligible. We can find such a fabric at several mills, though a little inferior. *Faust* abounds in the disagreeable. The vice is purient, learned, Parisian." He tells us that it is a "rule of manners to avoid exaggeration," but still frequently fails, as in the following petulances, to remember the rule :—

"It is the wisdom of a man, in every instance of his labour, to *hitch* his waggon to a star." "If a man's centrality is incomprehensible to us, we may as well *snub* the sun." "In the dance of God there is not one of the chorus but can and will begin to spin, monumental as he looks." "Zoologists may deny that horse-hairs in the water always turn to worms, but I find that whatever is old corrupts, and the past turns to snakes." "The works of genius cost nothing. Shakespeare

made his Hamlet as a bird weaves its nest." "The Bible itself is like an old Cremona; it has been played upon by the devotion of thousands of years, till every word and particle is public and tunable."

The following are among his recent wiser, though not always consistent, utterances :—

"If you do not use the tools, they use you. A man builds a fine house, and now he has a master. A man has a reputation and he is no longer free." "We pray to be conventional. But the wary Heaven takes care you shall not be, if there is anything good in you. Dante was very bad company, and was never invited to dinner. . . . Columbus discovered no isle or quay so lonely as himself." "The hope of any time must be always sought in minorities. Literary history is a record of the power of minorities of one." "Bad kings and governors help us if only they are bad enough." "Things said for conversation are chalk-eggs," but "conversation at its best is a series of intoxications." "The peace of society and the decorum of tables seems to require that next to a notable wit should always be posted a phlegmatic man." "You shall not speak ideal truth in prose, but you may in verse." "Cure the drunkard, heal the insane, mollify the homicide, but what lessons can be devised for the debauchee of sentiment." "If a man has manners and talent he may dress roughly and carelessly. It is only when mind and character slumber that the dress can be seen." "I have heard, with admiring submission, the experience of the lady who declared that the sense of being perfectly well dressed gives a feeling of inward tranquillity which religion is powerless to bestow." "The third felicity of age is that it has found expression. The youth suffers not only from ungratified desires, but from powers untried. . . . Michael Angelo's head is full of masculine and gigantic figures, as gods walking, which make him savage until his furious chisel can render them into marble."

The only change observable in Mr. Emerson's speculative views, on comparison of his earlier and recent work, is a distinctly more affirmative view on the question of Immortality; on which these are among his latest utterances :—

"The sceptic affirms that the universe is a nest of boxes, and that there is nothing in the last box." "Our passions, our endeavours, have something ridiculous and mocking, if we come to so hasty an end. If not to be, how like the bells of a fool is the trump of fame. . . . Will you build magnificently for mice." "All the comfort I have found teaches me to confide that I shall not have less in times and places that I do not yet know. The good Power can easily provide me millions more as good." "I have heard that whenever the name of man is spoken, the doctrine of immortality is announced. It cleaves to his

constitution. The mode of it baffles our wit, and no whisper comes to us from the other side; but the inference from the working of intellect—hiving knowledge, hiving skill—at the end of life just ready to be born, affirms the inspirations of affection and of the moral sentiment."

Howe'er it be, it is pleasant to think that the veteran sage, who has led us through "many goodly states and kingdoms" of thought, should have passed with hope to his harbourage.

Original thinkers are commonly as unfortunate in their disciples as great works are in their continuations. The revelations of the prophet are caged in formulæ, the inspirations of the poet burlesqued in vagaries, the inconsistencies of the philosopher reconciled by mutilating the truth, the maxims of the teacher made false by isolation. Emerson tells men to act boldly as their nature bids; but he has in reserve an *Ode to Duty*, some traditional checks, the safeguard of a cool temper, personal regards, and an almost fiery national zeal. Whitman is Emerson stripped of all but the last, and unrestrained as

> "When wild in woods the noble savage ran."

Thoreau is Emerson without domestic ties, or wish for them; save for a streak of benevolence, without those of humanity, and without patriotism; but interesting by the clear genius, ethereal freedom, serene and absolute intrepidity of a spirit that

> "to the elements did stand
> In nearer kindred than our race."

In his works—the unflecked mirrors of his mind—we have the love of independence, pushed to scorn of sympathy; the habit of contradiction exaggerated to caricature, the passion for solitude indulged to selfishness. He was like his master in his combination of pantheistic theory

with intense practical individualism: in his lofty ideas of friendship, religion, love: in his worship of sincerity, courage, and "the perfect will:" in his "communion with fine translunary things:" as also in the polish of his paragraphs, and the fragmentary form of his thought. Of both might be said what has been said of one, "His works are like a sky, full of separate stars." He was unlike in his thorough revulsion from the ordinary active world, his consistent contempt of society and politics, and his essentially conservative aristocracy. "Emerson," he says, "tells me he is driven to all sorts of resources, and among the rest to men. I tell him we differ only in our resources. Mine is to get away from men." The recluse of Concord liked to leave his garden once a week, and look into the eyes of his audiences. "We lose our days," he exclaims in his essay on *Clubs*, "and are barren of thoughts for want of some person to talk with. The understanding can no more empty itself by its own action than can a deal box. . . . A scholar does not wish to be always pumping his brains, he wants gossip." The hermit of Walden answers: "Woe to him who wants a companion, for he is unfit to be the companion even of himself." "I love my friends very much, but I find that it is of no use to go to see them. I hate them commonly when I am near them; they belie themselves, and deny me continually." "Warm your body by healthful exercise, not by cowering over a stove. Warm your spirit by performing independently noble deeds, not by ignobly seeking the sympathy of your fellows, who are not better than yourself." Emerson's *Threnody* is one of the most pathetic dirges in any language. On a dead friend Thoreau stoically writes: "I do not wish to see John ever again. We do not treat or esteem each other for what we are, but for what we are capable of being. Do not the flowers die every year?" "What is this heaven which they expect, if it is no better than they expect? . . . Here is our

heaven. . . . What a fool he must be who thinks that his El Dorado is anywhere but where he lives!" Elsewhere, on picking up a button from the coat of the drowned Marquis of Ossoli, on the sea-shore, he reaches the acme of egotism: "Held up it intercepts the light,—an actual button,—and yet all the life it is connected with is less substantial to me, and interests me less, than my faintest dream. Our thoughts are the epochs in our lives; all else is but as a journal of the winds that blew while we were here." Emerson believed in "Address" and "Tact," and with all his eloquence about minorities of one, in Success; he was good company and enjoyed it. Thoreau, talking of some potent public speech, remarked that whatever succeeded with an audience was bad; and, when asked to join in a walk, said that he had "no walks to throw away on company," and confessed that he had "an appetite for solitude, as of an infant for sleep." Of the visitors who pestered his retreat, he writes in a passage which goes some way to refute the accusation of want of humour, and to confirm that of cynicism—

"I had some guests from those not reckoned commonly among the towns poor, but who should be; who are among the world's poor at any rate; guests who appeal not to your 'hospitality,' but to your *hospitality*; who earnestly wish to be helped, and preface their appeal with the information that they are resolved, for one thing, never to help themselves. . . . Objects of charity are not guests. . . . Men of almost every degree of wit called on me in the migrating season; men who had more wits than they knew what to do with; men who did not know when their visit had terminated, though I went about my business again, answering them from greater and greater remoteness . . . ministers who spoke of God as if they enjoyed a monopoly of the subject, who could not bear all kinds of opinions . . . runaway slaves with plantation manners . . . one real runaway slave among the rest, whom I helped to forward toward the north star . . . men of one idea, like a hen with one chicken . . . men of ideas instead of legs, a sort of intellectual centipede, that made you crawl all over. Finally, there were the self-styled reformers, the greatest bores of all. One man proposed a book in which visitors should write their names, as at the White Mountains; but alas! I have too good a memory to make that necessary."

HENRY D. THOREAU was born in Concord, Massachusetts, in July 1817, and graduated at Harvard without honours in 1837. He set little store on public-school education, saying, "It often makes a straight-cut ditch out of a free meandering brook." After a period of private teaching he wearied of it, tried the business of making pencils, gave it up, and betook himself, on the slender means obtained by land-surveying, to the task of living the freest life possible to a student of Nature, Character, and a few well-chosen Books. In 1845, wishing to show that a man could live without any help from any one, he with his own hands constructed a hut on the shores of Walden Pond, where he lived for two years in solitude, latterly interrupted by the intruders whom he has gibbeted, sometimes helping slaves by making his house a station of "the underground railway" to Canada; but mainly studying the trees and flowers, and insects and fish, and recording the results of his manual labour and mental reverie in a volume which has the charm of being written by a voluntary Robinson Crusoe, with a knowledge like that of White of Selborne. He spent his remaining years in travelling within a narrow range, in meditation and in his routine work, diverging only once into politics, when, in 1859, he delivered an address in favour of John Brown, then under arrest. An Abolitionist on principle, he seems, oddly enough, to have taken no interest in the war. Writing to a friend in April 1861, he asks, "What business have you, if you are an angel of light, to be pondering over the deeds of darkness, reading 'The New York Herald,' and the like? I do not so much regret the present condition of things in this country as I do that I ever heard of it. . . : Blessed are the young, for they do not read the President's message. Blessed are they who never read a newspaper, for they shall see Nature, and through her, God." A year later, we have his last written, or rather dictated, words: "You ask about my health. I suppose that I have

not many months to live; but of course I know nothing about it. I may add that I am enjoying existence as much as ever, and regret nothing." He died in the course of the year. Shortly afterwards Emerson edited his works, with an introduction, from which we take the following (sometimes slightly abridged) sentences:—

"Thoreau was bred to no profession; he never married; he lived alone; he never went to church; he never voted; he refused to pay a tax to the States; he ate no flesh, he drank no wine, he never knew the use of tobacco; and, though a naturalist, he used neither trap nor gun. . . . He had no temptations to fight against, no appetites, no passions. . . . The bachelor of thought and Nature, he chose to be rich by making his wants few and supplying them himself. He refused all invitations, preferred a good Indian to highly-cultivated people, and said he would rather go to Oregon than to London. . . . He used the railways as little as possible, walking hundreds of miles, and lodging at farmers' or at fishers' houses. . . . There was something military in his nature, rarely tender, and it cost him much less to say 'No' than to say 'Yes.' . . . 'I love Henry,' said a friend, 'but I cannot like him; and as for taking his arm, I should as soon think of taking the arm of an elm-tree.'"

"Thoreau," says Mr. Lowell, in a more severe, sometimes corroborative, sometimes corrective, criticism, "was a man who made his own whim the Law, and accepted his defects as virtues—

"Indolent, unsuccessful, poor, he said activity was mere restlessness, success contemptible, money a curse, and benevolence a superstition. He had no creative imagination; he discovered nothing; but thought every common fact of nature, from moonlight to the planting of acorns by squirrels, a discovery of his own. The itch of originality infected and marred even the charm of his style. De Quincey tells us that Wordsworth was impatient when any one else spoke of mountains: so Thoreau wished to leave his name alone at the top of the hill. His works read as if all out of doors had kept its diary, and become its own Montaigne. He loves the out-of-the-way more than the true, always believes the contrary, and wishes to trump your suit. He insists on the public going back to flint and steel, when there is a match-box in his pocket which he knows well enough how to use. He leaps on Stylites' pillar, and forgets that he is far enough from his fellows when free from their weakness. Outstripping St. Pierre and Chateaubriand and Rousseau, he would almost have persuaded men to go on

all fours. His purity was wintry cold. . . . He had no feeling for the great political drama being enacted round him."

Thoreau has since his death, during the last four years especially, been favoured with many reviewers, competent and incompetent; but all I have seen is little else than water added to the wine of Emerson and Lowell. The occasional want of sympathy, hardness answering hardness, in the criticism of the last, naturally arises from the antagonism of their dispositions. The poet and politician is active to restlessness, practical, and almost fiercely patriotic; the essayist lethargic, self-complacently defiant, and too nearly a stoico-epicurean adiaphorist to discompose himself, in party or even in national strifes. We can hardly conceive anything more shocking to Mr. Lowell than the following:—

"The whole enterprise of this nation, which is not an upward but a Western one, is totally devoid of interest to me. It is perfectly heathenish—a fillibustering toward heaven by the great western route. They may go their way to their manifest destiny, which I trust is not mine. I see them on their winding way; but no music is wafted from their host; only the rattling of change in their pockets. What end do they propose to themselves beyond Japan? what aims more lofty than the prairie dogs? As it respects these things, I have not changed an opinion, one iota from the first. As the stars looked to me when I was a shepherd in Assyria, they look to me now a New Englander. . . . Whether Pierce or Scott is elected, not a new scintillation of light flashes on me.

"I very rarely feel any itching to be what is called 'useful to my fellow men.' . . . Sometimes—when my thoughts for want of employment fall into humdrum—I have dreamed of putting out a fire; but it must have got well a-going. . . . What a foul subject is this of doing good instead of minding one's own life, which should be his 'business.' When in the progress of a life a man swerves . . . then the drama turns to tragedy, and makes haste to its fifth act. . . . Such are cursed with *duties* and the neglect of duties. 'For such the decalogue was made.'"

"There is much matter in these convertites" to the life of Arden Wood, or Walden Lake. Though the New England republican has the warmer heart, the citizen of the world,

living out of the world, has the finer style; a style which, he says, "drops from him simply and directly as a stone falls to the ground:" his matter may be defaced by violence; his manner is never marred by pedantry. At his best he may be taken as a model. If we inquire further into the record of this abnormal being, this "half-disembodied spirit," who, on the faith of no definite creed, asks mankind to live, like himself, as half-disembodied spirits, we find his work falls under three main heads—his report of the *Walden Life*, his *Excursions*, and his *Letters*.

Thoreau essayed verse, not always unsuccessfully, for his want of the lyric faculty was partially recompensed by his incisiveness. The following, on the loss of a friend, is a fragment of a Shakespearian sonnet:—

> "Eternity may not the chance repeat;
> But I must tread my single way alone,
> In sad remembrance that we once did meet,
> And know that bliss irrevocably gone."

A line of his stanzas on Inspiration has the same firm step—

> "Time cannot bend the line that God has writ."

His addresses to "Mist" and "Haze"—

> "Toil of the day displayed, sun dust,
> Aerial surf upon the shores of earth"—

exhibit the brightness of his vision: as also that to "Smoke"—

> "Light-winged Smoke! Icarian bird,
> Melting thy pinions in thy upward flight,
> Lark without song and messenger of dawn,
> Circling above thy hamlets as thy nest;
> Or else, departing dream and shadowy form
> Of midnight vision, gathering up thy skirts;
> By night star-veiling, and by day
> Darkening the light and blotting out the sun;
> Go thou, my incense, upward from this hearth,
> And ask the gods to pardon this clear flame."

But there is nothing in his verse so poetical as his best

prose, as in the pathetic allegory, familiar to the readers of *Walden*, that recalls passages of Novalis or Heine—

"I long ago lost a hound, a bay horse, and a turtle-dove, and am still on their trail. Many are the travellers I have spoken to concerning them, describing their trades and what calls they answered to. I have met one or two who had heard the hound, and the tramp of the horse, and even seen the dove disappear behind a cloud: and they seemed as anxious to recover them as if they had lost them themselves."

Or this essence of *A Soul's Tragedy*, expanded by Browning in the prose and poetry of Chiappino's life—

"The youth gets together the materials to build a bridge to the moon or a temple on the earth, and the middle-aged man concludes to build a wood-shed with them."

I know nothing more true or more pathetic.

Thoreau, contemning civilisation,—subordinating Chaucer to the Ballads, and Shakespeare to the *Iliad*, in his love of "the wild," satisfied with none,—asks, "Where is the literature that gives expression to Nature?" Of mere external Nature his own prose is perhaps the most literal rendering. In this respect he transcends Emerson, who says of him, "He knew the country like a fox or bird, and was familiar with the habits of every weed. He saw as with microscope, heard as with ear trumpet, and his memory was a photographic register of all he saw and heard." Lowell says he is, here and there, at fault; but this must be the result of defective training, for he observes the loss and gain of the sea-beach as closely as the marks on the stump of a cedar. He takes us with him wherever he goes. We feel, on closing the book, that we have sailed for a week together on Concord and Merrimac, by bay and bluff, over rapid and pool, in the fisherman's dory, by the haunts of Penacooks and Pawtuckets, amid memories of old Puritan wars, and listening to cunning words on Persius and Ossian, Chaucer and Horace. We hear the surf of the θάλασσα ἠχηεσσα on Cape Cod, where "a man may stand and put all America behind him," a cliff "anchored to the heavens by

cables of beach-grass, and see the light twinkling in the watchtower, and smell the seaweed about the rocks, or lose our way and hob-nob with the Indians in the thick fir-woods of Maine.

The *Excursions* are landscapes in miniature, embracing every feature of New England summers and winters, autumnal forest tints, wild apples, stormy shores, and winding streams, with here and there a picture of a landlord, or a beetle, or a fish, lit up with an electric ray of Platonism—interesting and unique, because they are at once accurate and ideal. Here is the spirit of the man who is playing a perpetual game of *solitaire*—

"I can walk any number of miles, commencing at my own door, without going by any house. From many a hill I can see civilisation afar off. . . . Man and his affairs, church and state and school, trade and commerce, and manufactures and agriculture, even politics,—the most alarming of them all,—I am pleased to see how little space they occupy in the landscape."

And here of the astronomer—

"It does not concern men who are asleep in their beds, but it is very important to the traveller whether the moon shines brightly or is obscured. It is not easy to realise the serene joy of all the earth when she commences to shine unobstructedly, unless you have often been abroad in moonlight nights. She seems to be waging continual war with the clouds in your behalf. The sailors say she is eating them up. She comes on magnifying her dangers by her light, displaying them in all their blackness, then suddenly casts them behind into a light concealed, and goes her way triumphant through a space of clear sky."

And here is the philosophic athlete—

"If you would get exercise go in search of the springs of life. Think of a man swinging dumb-bells for his health when those springs are bubbling in far-off pastures unsought by him. Moreover, you must walk like a camel, which is said to be the only beast which ruminates when walking. When a traveller asked Wordsworth's servant to show him her master's study, she answered, 'Here is his library, but his study is out of doors.'"

In these and a hundred sketches, any one may recognise

Emerson painted with a big brush. Thoreau is more original in the minutiæ of description, only appreciable by professed naturalists; and in his *Letters*, where he sends, as "from peak to peak of Olympus," messages to friends, of a stoicism more severe, perhaps more consistent, but therefore even more impracticable, than his master's.

Thoreau's writing invites extract. From his premeditated *mots*, wise or startling, deep or shallow, but all lucent, one might construct a volume of anthology. Among those cameos of English prose we may select the following:—

"Aim above morality; there is not necessarily any ugly fact which may not be eradicated from life." "What a wedge, what a beetle, what a catapult is an earnest man: what can resist him!" "Let our meanness be our footstool, not our cushion." "The smallest seed of faith is worth more than the largest fruit of happiness." "Make the most of your regrets; never smother your sorrow; but tend and cherish it. . . . To regret deeply is to live a fast." "The talent of composition is very dangerous—the striking out the heart of life at a blow, as the Indian takes off a scalp. I feel as if my life had grown more outward when I can express it." "The old mythology is incomplete without a god or goddess of sincerity, on whose altars we might offer up all the products of our farms, our workshops, and our studies. It should be our *Lar* when we sit on the hearth, and our Tutelar Genius when we walk abroad. . . . I mean sincerity in our dealings with ourselves mainly; the other is comparatively easy." "That we have but little faith is not sad, but that we have but little faithfulness. By faithfulness faith is earned." "My saddest sorrows are apt to be but transient regrets. . . . I am of kin to the sod, and partake largely of its dull patience—in winter expecting the sun of spring." "Man is continually saying to woman, Why will you not be more wise? Woman is continually saying to man, Why will you not be more loving? It is not in their wills to be wise or loving; but unless each is both wise and loving there can be neither wisdom nor love." "Hate can pardon more than love." "Love must be as much a light as a flame." "Walt Whitman . . . does not celebrate love at all. It is as if the beasts spoke," but "if we are shocked, whose experience is it that we complain of?"

Thoreau's hard sense or solid scepticism is exhibited conspicuously in his utter antagonism to the "Manifestations" that were then so frequent and fashionable in some New England circles—

"Most people here" (*i.e.* in Concord) "believe in . . . spirits which the very bull-frogs in our meadows would black-ball. Their evil genius is seeing how low it can degrade them. The hooting of owls, the croaking of frogs, is celestial wisdom in comparison. If I could be brought to believe in the things which they believe, I should . . . buy a share in the first Immediate Annihilation Company that offered. I would exchange my immortality for a glass of small beer. . . . Where *are* the heathen? Was there ever any superstition before? And yet I suppose there may be a vessel, this very moment, setting sail from the coast of North America to that of Africa with a missionary on board. Consider the dawn and the sunrise, the rainbow and the evening, the words of Christ and the aspirations of all the saints! Hear music, see, smell, taste, feel anything, and then hear these idiots, inspired by the cracking of a restless board, humbly asking, 'Please, spirit, if you cannot answer by knocks, answer by tips of the table'!!!"

Emerson writes exultingly of America, "The world has no such landscape, the æons of history no such hour," and yet in the same volume confesses, "Our politics are disgusting . . . they were never more corrupt and brutal; and Trade, that pride and darling of our ocean, that educator of nations, that benefactor in spite of itself, ends in shameful defaulting, bubble, and bankruptcy all over the world." Thoreau, with a modified optimism, exhibits an even keener contempt for the Exchange and fiercer recoil from Wall Street—

"Not merely the Brook Farm and Fourierite communities, but now the community generally has failed. . . . Men will tell you sometimes that 'money's hard.' That shows it was not made to eat, I say. . . . As if one struggling in mid-ocean with a bag of gold on his back should gasp out, 'I am worth a hundred thousand dollars.' I see them struggling just as ineffectually on dry land. . . . This general failure, both private and public, is rather occasion for rejoicing, as reminding us whom we have at the helm. . . . If our merchants did not most of them fail, and the banks too, my faith in the old laws of the world would be staggered. . . . If thousands are thrown out of employment, it suggests that they were not well employed. Why don't they take the hint? It is not enough to be industrious; so are the ants."

How true, how hard! So are most of the scintillations from this crystal, colder if clearer than the rays of the opal

over the way. Parents in literature and art, have, as a rule, little philoprogenitiveness. They are apt to regard their offspring as superfluities, *lusus naturæ*, or mocking-birds. But the father in this case is generously affectionate to his firstborn man-child, on whose grave he has flung the fairest votive wreath :—

"There is a flower known to botanists, one of the same genus with our summer plant called 'life-everlasting:' it is named by the Swiss *Edelweiss*, which signifies noble purity. Thoreau seemed to me living in the hope to gather this plant, which belonged to him of right. . . . The country knows not yet or in the least part how great a son it has lost. It seems an injury that he should leave in the midst of his broken task, which none else can accomplish—a kind of indignity to so noble a soul, that it should depart out of nature before yet he has been really shown to his peers for what he was. But he at least is content. His soul was made for the noblest society. He had in a short life exhausted the capabilities of this world. Wherever there is knowledge, wherever there is virtue, wherever there is beauty, he will find a throne."

CHAPTER X.

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

"ERNEST began to speak, giving to the people of what was in his heart and mind. His words had power because they accorded with his thoughts; and his thoughts had reality and depth, because they harmonised with the life that he had always lived." It is pleasant to believe that the noble apologue of *The Great Stone Face* (from which the words are taken) is a tribute paid by the novelist to the philosopher of Concord, and that these sentences are designed to disclose, as they do, the secret of Mr. Emerson's influence over his countrymen. Their writer had little sympathy with the Transcendental movement, headed by his contemporary. He preferred loitering "by the river's brim" to Neo-Platonic rhapsodies, and scraps of the Vedas. Buried in his retreat, and in the moonlight of his own mysticism, he cast a half compassionate smile on the pilgrims who thronged to the neighbouring cottage as to an oracular shrine—"Young visionaries to whom just so much of insight had been imparted as to make life a labyrinth around them, coming to seek the clue that should guide them out of their self-involved bewilderment; gray-headed theorists whose systems, at first air, had finally imprisoned them in an iron framework, travelling painfully to his door, not to ask deliverance, but to invite the free spirit into their own thraldom." Quaint and characteristic satire! but

the satirist united with the devotees in admiring the genius and purity of the thinker. "It was good," he says, "to meet him in the woodpaths or sometimes in our avenue, with that pure intellectual gleam diffused about his presence, like the garment of a shining one."

Half a mile from Emerson's house, within view of the bridge where, a century ago,

> "The embattled farmers stood
> Who fired the shot heard round the world,"

between two tall gateposts of rough-hewn stone, terminating the vista of an avenue of black ash-trees, we catch sight of the Old Manse, which, for three years, sheltered the foremost prose artist of America. It was here that Nathaniel Hawthorne gathered his mosses; and, from one of the gray windows, looked on "the hitherto obscure waters," where they "gleam forth into history," congratulating the Assabeth on "the incurable indolence by which it is saved from becoming the slave of human ingenuity—the most unexcitable and sluggish stream that ever loitered towards its eternity, the sea." No river of such slight proportions has ever been described as Hawthorne has described this, perhaps half-unconsciously finding in it an emblem of his own life and character.

"In the light," he tells us, "of a calm and golden sunset, it is the more lovely for the quietude that so well accords with the hour; when even the wind, after blustering all day long, usually hushes itself to rest. Every tree and rock and every blade of grass is distinctly imaged, and however unsightly in reality assumes ideal beauty in the reflection. The minutest things of earth and the broad aspect of the firmament are pictured equally without effort, and with the same felicity of success. All the sky glows downward at our feet: the rich clouds float through the unruffled bosom of the stream like heavenly thoughts through a peaceful heart. We will not then malign our river as gross and impure while it can glorify itself with so adequate a picture of the heaven that broods above it; or, if we remember its tawny hue and the muddiness of its bed, let it be a symbol that the earthiest human soul has an infinite spiritual capacity, and may contain the better world within its depths."

This author sees a world of mystery in a few flat acres, a country garden, and a torpid stream. "Many strangers," he writes, "come in the summer time to view the battleground. For my own part, I have never found my imagination much excited by this or any other scene of historical celebrity; nor would the placid margin of the river have lost any of its charm for me had men never fought and died there." His fancy is more arrested by the tragic end of a single soldier, whom a boy killed by a sudden impulse, and by Indian arrowheads in his garden, than by the event of the first revolutionary triumph. But it is not for metaphysics that he sets history aside: he has something to offer to his friends which he thinks better than either, and which we now in England want more than all our wealth, or perhaps than all our knowledge. Hawthorne tells us what this is; reading the text on which his life was a sermon: "Others could give them pleasure, and amusement or instruction,—these could be picked up anywhere,—but it was for me to give them REST—rest in a life of trouble. What better could be done for those weary and wayworn spirits? The great want which mankind labours under at this present period is SLEEP. The world should recline its vast head on the first convenient pillow, and take an age-long nap. It has gone distracted through a morbid activity; and, while preternaturally wide awake, is tormented by visions that seem real to it now, but would assume their true aspect were all things once set right by an interval of sound repose." The same truth is expressed by the philosopher, who, from a different side, is pushed by the hurry and competition, jostling and noise, of his age and country, on to the same platform with the moralising novelist: "We live on different planes. There is an external life, which is educated at school, taught to read, write, cipher and trade; taught to grasp all the boy can get, urging him to put himself forward, to make himself useful and agreeable in the

world, to ride, run, argue, and contend, unfold his talents, shine, conquer, and possess. But the inner life sits at home, and does not learn to do things, nor value these feats at all. It loves truth because it is itself real; it loves right, it knows nothing else; but it makes no progress. A person of this temper said to a man of much activity, 'I will pardon you that you do so much, and you me that I do nothing.' And Euripides says that 'Zeus hates busybodies and those who do too much.'"

Hawthorne lived wholly in "the inner life:" he did not care for cipher, or trade, or war, or "putting himself forward." Pitchforked, by the gratitude of his old schoolfellow, President Pierce, into the consulship of Liverpool, he never forgave the Lord Mayor of London for compelling him to make a good speech. "We have among us a gentleman of distinguished literary and commercial reputation." "Never," says the victim, "were such adjectives before conjoined; I had rather he had put henbane into my turtle soup." Such a man could hardly be expected to make "progress" in the ordinary sense of the word: he made little even as an artist: he was inspired by nature, not only with what he had to say, but with the manner of saying it. His first sustained work was his masterpiece; yet his reputation has been as rapidly progressive as that of Mr. Browning, whom he in several respects resembles. Twenty years ago (when *Paracelsus*, *Pippa Passes*, and *Luria* had been written for fifteen years) greatly to admire their author was regarded as a certificate in lunacy: now it is the fashion to stand agaze before his most morbid contortions. Twenty years ago, a notice of the *Scarlet Letter* and the *Marble Faun* was declined by one of our leading Quarterlies, on the ground that the subject was not worthy of an article. In the preface (1851) to the *Twice Told Tales* we read, "The author has a claim to one distinction which, as none of his literary brethren will care about disputing it with him,

he need not be afraid to mention. He was for a good many years the obscurest man of letters in America. Excepting the *Rill from the Town Pump*, he has no grounds for supposing that the work of twelve years of his manhood met with the good or evil fortune to be read by anybody." *Tempora mutantur*—the theme of his genius and its peculiarities, at last fully recognised on both sides of the Atlantic, has been discussed to satiety. The most natural question regarding a young critic is now no longer: has he published his contemptuous estimates of Byron and Scott, or made his tiresome analysis of *In Memoriam?* but, has he written his subtle review of Mr. Hawthorne? In reality, there is little to add to his reviews of himself, with their pleasant autobiography and self-criticism. In the prelude to *The Scarlet Letter*, he takes us into the confidence of his ancestry; who came to his native place —"bleak, hard, scriptural Salem," the headquarters of Puritan intolerance, two centuries and a half ago. The first of the race was a soldier, legislator, and judge, "a ruler in the church," and, of course, "a bitter persecutor," especially of the Quakers. The second was a more relentless bigot, who devoted himself mainly to torturing, hanging, and burning witches.

"'Their blood may fairly be said to have left a stain upon his old dry bones,' says the descendant of those worthies, adding, 'I know not whether they bethought themselves to repent and ask pardon of Heaven of their cruelties, or whether they are now groaning under them in another state of being. Doubtless, however, either of those stern and black-browed Puritans would have thought it quite a sufficient retribution for his sins, that after so long a lapse of years, the old trunk of the family tree, with so much venerable moss upon it, should have borne as its topmost bough an idler like myself. What is he? murmurs one gray shadow of my forefathers. A writer of story-books! What mode of glorifying God may that be? Why, the fellow may as well have been a fiddler! Yet, let them scorn me as they will, strong traits of their nature have intertwined themselves with mine."

Hawthorne's immediate ancestors had been sailors travelling from Cuba to Calcutta, where his father died. He himself

was born (4th July 1804) at Salem, near the Witch-House. The witches never seem to have left this dweller on the edge of supernatural ground, though his wand frequently charmed them into fairies. The external events of his life, of general interest, are few. Sent by his maternal uncle and guardian to Bowdoin College, he graduated there in 1825, with Longfellow. In the previous year the poet had to write the Latin Oration on the theme *Anglici Poetæ;* the novelist the Essay *De Patribus Conscriptis.* Like most men of genius, Hawthorne claims to have, when under discipline, led a desultory life, and in later days writes to an old fellow-student—

"While we were lads together, gathering blue-berries in study hours, under those academic pines, or watching the great logs as they tumbled along the current of the Androscoggin, or shooting pigeons or gray squirrels in the woods, or bat-fowling in the summer twilight, or catching trouts in that shadowy little stream, which I suppose is still travelling riverward through the forest (though you and I will never cast a line in it again)—two idle lads, in short, and doing a hundred things that the Faculty never heard of, or else it had been the worse for us; still it was your prognostic of your friend's destiny that he was to be a writer of fiction."

Returning to Salem, he lived there for ten years, shunning society; "after nightfall, stealing out from his room into the silent streets, shadowy as the ghosts with which, to his imagination, the dusky town was haunted; gliding beneath the house in which the witch trials were held, or across the moonlight hill on which the witches were hung; and weaving his memories and impressions into his first series of fragmentary romances." These, says Mr. G. W. Curtis,—from whose appreciative sketch in the North American Review (October 1864) we have borrowed the above quotation,—"seeming at first but the pleasant fancies of a mild recluse, hold the mind with a Lamia-like fascination. There are sunny gleams upon the pages, but a melancholy chill pervades the book." "Most of it" is bathed in "the fateful atmosphere

in which the startled heart stands still." The *Twice Told Tales* might be entitled the Shadows of Salem. Similarly, all the author's works reflect, though not always contemporaneously, the leading events of his career; the next stage of which is marked by a period of routine work in the Boston Custom-house, 1839. In 1840, Dr. Ripley and others formed a communistic association at West Roxbury, called "Brook Farm." Socialism allures imaginative natures: it seldom retains them. Hawthorne joined this in 1841, but soon (some say, in ill temper) abandoned an enterprise, of which perhaps the most permanent result is *The Blithedale Romance*. In 1842 he married, and in the manse at Concord lived, for three years, a life of contemplative indolence. In 1846 he was promoted by Mr. Bancroft (under Polk) to the control of the Custom-house at Salem; and, in the most humorous of his prefaces, he has given us an account of his predecessors, and of his cares in office, ending by his being "officially decapitated," and going about "like the headless horseman," on the change of Government. Among the old documents in the place, he, in a happier hour than that which found the basis of *The Ring and the Book*, fell on the story of Hester Prynne, and wove out of it *The Scarlet Letter*. This romance, discovered we may almost say by Mr. Fields in 1849, was published in 1850, and achieved an immediate success. Hawthorne's external career was fortunate in affording him the alternation of activity and repose, of contact with, and retirement from, the world, that is most favourable to high art. His next sojourn was at Lenox,[1] a village in Berkshire, in an old red farmhouse,

[1] This chapter, the nucleus of which appeared in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* in 1874, was delivered as a Lecture at Cheltenham, 1879, before I had the pleasure of reading Mr. James's interesting biography and judicious criticism. He informs us that Lenox is now a fashionable resort, but that, "thirty years ago, a man of fancy . . . might have found there both inspiration and tranquillity. Hawthorne found so much of both that he wrote more during his two years of residence . . . than at any (other) period of his career."

where he indulged a love of solitude approaching Thoreau's, and in such protracted shyness that, on seeing any one before him on the road, he would often jump over the wall into the adjoining meadow. Here he wrote *The House of the Seven Gables* (published January 1851) and *The Wonder Book*. In 1852 he returned to Concord, whence, in May, he issued *The Blithedale Romance*, followed by the *Tanglewood Tales*, and, in the same year, the *Life of Franklin Pierce;* who, elected President in 1853, appointed his old college friend to the important post of Consul at Liverpool. The record of Hawthorne's four years' life in England is in the *Old Home*, not, however, published till three years after his return to America. Resigning his consulate in 1857, he subsequently spent nearly three years in Italy, and to his residence there we owe *The Marble Faun*. Home again (1860), in his "Wayside" under Concord Hill, he wrote a few more sketches; commenced a new novel, his over-mystical *Septimius;* met some English interviewers, who afterwards gave accounts of his character and habits; began, almost reluctantly, to know himself famous; and died in 1864, being found in his last sleep as if he had passed from a pleasant dream, while the thunders of a war which perplexed him were raging around. To his death also we owe a book,—six volumes of crude miscellaneous notes—the publication of which must have made that exquisite writer and fastidious critic turn in his otherwise quiet grave.

It is impossible to speak too highly of Hawthorne's style, which, without any of the defects often found in the writings of his countrymen, has yet a healthy national flavour. It is accurate and strong, terse and yet full, rich and yet simple, harmonious, varied, and suggestive. These excellences in themselves give a fascination to his most ordinary themes—as to his descriptions of natural scenery and works of art. We may set his pictures of Western Italy beside Mr. Ruskin's

Venice, before the Austrians left it to the renovators. Mark how the humour and cynicism of the following introduction takes away any appearance of flourish from the almost passionate enthusiasm of the close:—

"When we have once known Rome and left her where she lies, like a long decaying corpse retaining a trace of the noble shape it was, but with accumulated dust, under fungus growth overspreading all its more admirable features—left her in utter weariness, no doubt, of her narrow, crooked, intricate streets, so uncomfortably paved with little squares of lava, that to tread over them is a penetential pilgrimage; so indescribably ugly, moreover, so cold, so alley-like, into which the sun never falls, and where a chill wind forces its deadly breath into our lungs—and left her, tired of the sight of those immense seven-storied yellow-washed hovels, —or call them palaces,—where all that is dreary in domestic life seems magnified and multiplied, and weary of climbing those staircases which ascend from a ground-floor of cook-shops, cobblers' stalls, stables, and regiments of cavalry, to a middle region of princes, cardinals, and ambassadors, and an upper tier of artists just beneath the unattainable sky—left her, worn out with shivering at the cheerless and smoky fireside by day, and feasting with our own substance the ravenous little populace of a Roman bed at night—left her sick at heart of Italian trickery, which has uprooted whatever faith in man's integrity had endured till now, and sick with sour bread, sour wine, rancid butter, and bad cookery needlessly bestowed on evil meats—left her disgusted with the pretence of holiness and the reality of nastiness, each equally omnipresent—left her half lifeless from the languid atmosphere . . . left her half crushed down in spirit with the desolation of her ruin and the hopelessness of her future—left her, in short, hating her with all our might, and adding our individual curse to the infinite anathema which her old crimes have unmistakably brought down. When we have left Rome in such mood as this we are astonished by the discovery that our heart-strings have mysteriously attached themselves to the Eternal City, and are drawing us thitherward again as if it were more familiar, even more intimately our home than the spot where we were born."

Hawthorne's descriptions can seldom be disentangled from the mood of mind in which he views them, or the circumstances by which in his pages they are invested. His works are "of imagination all compact." Amid the din of voices, or buried in his manse, on the wharf, or sitting at the receipt of custom, gliding down the Assabeth, or loitering along the Appian Way, he dwells perpetually among visions. The sea-

shore tells him secrets of the Past, and the prattling village is full of a present sympathy. Emerson somewhere tells a story of a lady, who, as they were walking together in the forest, said to him that the woods always seemed to her to *wait* as if the genii who inhabited them suspended their deeds till the wayfarer had passed on. When Hawthorne passes, Nature does not *wait:* she is content to take him into her confidence, and play her tricks unreservedly before his eyes. But the features of nature and life and character which he loves to draw are peculiar. They are, for the most part, sombre and mysterious, not with the sort of mystery, in which, for instance, Edgar Poe delights, that attends unprecedented events and unnatural marvels, but with that which he digs for and finds under the current of common lives. His prevailing thought is "things are not what they seem:" he is so fond of peering beneath the surface of existence that, in his pages, it sometimes loses its ordinary reality. He tries to look *through* life so constantly that he scarcely takes time to look *at* it. We may regard men, in the manner Chaucer or Scott did, as squares or circles, complete externally, so that we walk round them; or we may regard them, as we in morbid moments scrutinise ourselves, and see only the near curve of the parabola, the ends of which recede into infinity. The highest art is that which comprehends both aspects, and, looks "at all things as they are, but through a kind of glory." As in the works of our master dramatist, it adds the idealism of the *Faërie Queene* to the realism of the *Canterbury Tales.* Hawthorne, on the other hand, to borrow a frequently-quoted phrase from himself, weaves his fictions "in the moonlight of romance;" and, while he admits that materials for a better book than he has written lie scattered on the page of life open before him, he has seldom stooped to gather them. "Moonlight," he repeats, in his preface to the *Scarlet Letter,* "is a medium the most suitable for a romance writer to get acquainted

with his illusive guests. The room becomes a neutral territory . . . where the Actual and the Imaginary may meet." Hawthorne has sometimes abandoned this neutral territory and given us a few short sketches, which show that he is eminently capable, when he chooses, of illustrating and characterising common things. Such among his minor tales are—*The Old Apple Dealer*, *Little Annie's Ramble*, *A Rill from the Town Pump*, *Sights from a Steeple*, the *Village Uncle*, the well-named *Buds and Bird Voices*, and the most humorous and genial of his lighter pieces, the *Seven Vagabonds*, on the pages of which the spirits of Chaucer and Lamb seemed to have jointly breathed. But his prevailing themes are drawn from the borderland or twilight between the two worlds, half real and half ideal—fairy tales in which human beings are the fairies, and are made to point morals of their own histories. Hawthorne's imagination was pestered by problems. This is his point of contact with the great but perverse modern English poet to whom I have before referred. Miss Thackeray writes of pleasant Normandy under the name of *White Cotton Nightcap Country*. "Let me see," cries the poet, "if I cannot find that, on that soft grass and under that smiling sun, some deed has been done that will make your blood curdle." He finds it; and with an exulting look of almost fiendish power, produces his hideous tale, *Red Cotton Nightcap Country*. Hawthorne is less malignant; but there is the same murky atmosphere about half his work, the same love of the abnormal in his soul; and after an eerie night in his company we sometimes long for the morning and Henry Fielding or Sir Walter Scott.

There are various gradations in his symbolism. In *The Wives of the Dead*, and *The Sister Years*, he brings us into contact with simple though striking vicissitudes of life. The *Snow Image* is only the best, though quite the best, in a special American department of Literature,—that of stories for

children—and any intelligent child will understand its lesson, that we may injure what we love by injudicious kindness. An older reader is required to see the satire in the last words, "'Wipe up the snow,' said Margaret Lindsay." But the poet-preacher prefers in general less apparent texts. Like the Ancient Mariner, he holds us with his glittering eye, and we must gaze with him on *Prophetic Pictures* on dingy walls, the lustre of *The Great Carbuncle* among the hills, or the passion-flowers of *Rappacini's Garden.* "Blessed," he exclaims in the last, a gorgeous Italian romance, of which the sentence points the moral, "Blessed are all simple emotions, be they dark or bright. It is the lurid intermixture of the two that produces the illumination of the Infernal Regions." And yet this lurid intermixture is the staple of his works: they are steeped in lights such as those that gleam over the furnaces in his ghastly *Ethan Brand.* Of the five volumes of his minor sketches, three at least are filled with allegories;—riddles, some of them hard to read, and open to doubtful, because double, interpretations. Fortunately the best of these are charming on the outside. The uninitiated reader may have the same pleasure from them as a man with a musical ear—who has yet not studied music—may derive from hearing one of Mozart's melodies. *The Great Stone Face* is a noble piece of writing, apart from the lesson it is intended to convey, that reasonable "hero-worship," rather than "*nil admirari,*" is the path to greatness. *Drowne's Wooden Image* and the *Artist of the Beautiful,* are in themselves "beautiful exceedingly." The pathos of *Lily's Quest* and *Edward Fane's Rosebud* lies on the surface, though the latter is as impossible to read aloud as the account of Colonel Newcome's death. The *Three-fold Destiny* obviously inculcates the truth that we may often find near at home what we have in vain been looking for at a distance. *Lady Eleanor's Mantle* tells its own story in a parable of the Nemesis of pride. In the

Birthmark the egotism of science is contrasted with the devotion of love. The *Celestial Railroad* is a satire on easy conversions: the *Fountain of Youth* laments the vain effort to recall its dreams. In the *Wedding Knell*, on the other hand, and the *Black Veil*, and *Roger Malvin's Burial*, and *Young Goodman Browne*, and *Wakefield*, we are in the bizarre region of Hoffman, or the hollow land of Novalis, prying into the solitude that environs every soul, or playing with the phantasies that perplex it. Some of these allegories are transparent: in others, where the sentences remain clear, the meaning is less so, and the criticism is justified that has compared the author to a clock that rings the minutes but not the hours.

Edgar Poe, in his lively though somewhat shallow critique, after expressing his warm admiration of Hawthorne's simpler style, proceeds to assail what he calls his transcendentalism, ending with the trenchantly-misplaced advice, "Let him mend his pen, get a bottle of visible ink, come out of the old manse, cut Mr. Alcott, hang if possible the editor of The Dial, and throw to the pigs all his odd numbers of the North American Review." The critic might as well have exhorted Charles Lamb to write like Hazlitt, Carlyle like Macaulay, or Edgar Poe like Irving. Hawthorne was, as we believe, in no considerable degree influenced by *The Dial;* but to bid him stick to externals, to observe rather than reflect, to become merely fanciful instead of essentially imaginative, was to commit the common mistake of telling men to be other than Nature has made them. His chief concern is not with the dresses but with the hearts of men—*interiora rerum:* his main care is not to observe or to sketch, but "to part and prove."

His longer works are all conceived in the same spirit. Carefully artistic, their interest as mere stories and the richness of their detail exempt them from the reproach of being

mainly didactic: but none of them is written merely for art's sake; each has some central idea, round which the drama revolves, or to which they converge. It has been remarked that each might easily have been condensed into one of his shorter tales; each of which in its turn might, by a counter process, have been expanded into an elaborate romance. In both, the incidents, though scarcely subordinate, are comparatively few; the parts are played by four or five abnormal human puppets under a microscope, in one instance applied to them by a provokingly impartial spectator, who professes his purpose to "pluck out the heart of" their mystery. Among the minor chords on which the author plays, there is a major, dominant through the whole, repeating itself as it were with a "persistence that must be answered to." The great question, over which in one form or other Hawthorne perpetually broods, is the Nature of Evil, the effect on the soul of error and misery and remorse, and their mysterious relation to the highest forms of human heroism and to human progress. It is worthy of note that his first considerable work is that which comes into closest contact with reality: his last that farthest from it. As an author, Hawthorne travelled in a direction opposite to Emerson; seemed, despite his long experience of practical life, to feel more distaste to it; till he found refuge from the tumults of the war in the rose-coloured clouds of *Septimius*. Unless the whole story of Mr. Surveyor Prue, the bit of embroidery wrought with "a now forgotten art," and the "roll of dingy paper around which it had been twisted," be a fiction, conceived "by the dim coal fire" of the Custom House, as audacious as the *Apparition of Mrs. Veal* and as successful, *The Scarlet Letter* has a root in actual facts. In any case the whole description of old New England life is like a piece of authentic history. The introduction of the "bearded men in sad-coloured garments, assembled round" the black flower of civilised society,

a Prison, is a fit overture to the drama. The picture of Hester "with the infant at her bosom, an object to remind . . . a papist . . . of the image of divine maternity," prepares us for the sympathy which pervades the tale, all the stages of which, save for an occasional excess of symbolism, are perfectly credible. Adequately to examine this work would demand a distinct essay; we can only remark that there is hardly a chapter in which the local colouring is not maintained with vivid realistic power, nor one in which it is not supplemented by some ideal touches. The multitude in the Market Place, the elders, seamen, magistrates, and rigid female censors of a people, "amongst whom religion and law were identical," play the part of chorus more naturally than the individuals to whom he elsewhere assigns it. Nor is there anything in the witch element, as represented by Mistress Hibbins, inconsistent with authentic records of the sternly superstitious time. Only in the forest, where it is easier to lose sight of the world than on the sea, are we permitted for a moment —the moment in which Hester tosses away her badge of shame—to forget the iron laws of real life. Of the chief actors in the scene, there is little to add to the foregone analysis of commentary. The heroine is far from commonplace,—indeed, one defect of Hawthorne's writings is that they hardly exhibit a single commonplace character—but she is, of the group, the least remarkable, beautiful as are her maternity, and her wavering between love and duty. Pearl, the elf-child, is the most fascinating of her race, more so even than Goethe's Mignon; but she is hardly human: her impish persistence in pressing home her mother's guilt, is only to be excused on the theory of her being one of the instruments appointed for retribution. Dimmesdale himself is a microcosm of the battle of Ormuzd and Ahriman. No incident is more poetically set forth than his hope of expiation by solitary penance on the midnight scaffold: none so weird as that on

which Mr. Stephen has dwelt, his impulses to blasphemy and half-diabolical possession, when, after his mental yielding to the temptress, he comes to believe that "the sin of trying to escape from his sin has brought him into sympathy with perverted spirits." But the master conception of the book is that of Roger Chillingworth, from whose point of view it becomes the tragedy of baffled revenge, a favourite theme, but never elsewhere so handled. Poe's *Cask of Amontillado* is the mere concentrated essence of Dumas' *Monte Christo:* the friar in Browning's cloister would kill Brother Laurence by a wish; the painter Lutwyche tries to lure Jules into a *mésalliance* and be rid of him. But the wronged physician's hate to the minister is almost love; he lavishes his skill to keep his victim alive for the torture of a vivisection, compared with which the experiments of Rutherford and Sequard are mercies; and would give his life, and the remaining shreds of the honour of the woman he but uses as an instrument, to ensure the eternal ruin of his foe.

It is necessary to bear this in mind to realise the sublime triumph of the close—

"He (Dimmesdale) still walked on, if that movement could be so described, which resembled the wavering effort of an infant, with its mother's arms in view stretched out to tempt him forward. And now almost imperceptible as were the latter steps of his progress, he had come opposite the well-remembered and weather-darkened scaffold, where long since, with all the dreary lapse of time between, Hester Prynne had encountered the world's ignominious stare. There stood Hester, leading little Pearl by the hand. And there was the scarlet letter on her breast. The minister here made a pause, although the music still played the stately and rejoicing march to which the procession moved. It summoned him onward—onward to the festival; but here he made a pause. Bellingham had for the last few moments kept an anxious eye upon him. He now left his own place in the procession and advanced to give assistance, judging from Mr. Dimmesdale's aspect that he must otherwise inevitably fall. But there was something in the latter's expression that waved back the magistrate, although a man not readily obeying the vague intimations that pass from one

spirit to another. The crowd meanwhile looked on with awe and wonder. This earthly faintness was in their view only another phase of the minister's celestial strength: nor would it have seemed a miracle too high to be wrought for one so holy, had he ascended before their eyes, waxing dimmer and brighter, and fading more and more into the light of heaven. He turned towards the scaffold and stretched forth his arms. 'Hester,' said he, 'come hither. Come hither, my little Pearl.' It was a ghastly look with which he regarded them, but there was something at once tender and strangely triumphant in it. At this instant old Roger Chillingworth thrust himself through the crowd—or perhaps, so dark, disturbed, and evil was his look, he rose up out of some nether region, to snatch back his victim from what he sought to do. 'Ha, tempter! Methinks thou art too late!' answered the minister, encountering his eye, fearfully but firmly. 'Thy power is not what it was. With God's help I shall escape thee now.' They beheld the minister ascend the steps, while still the little hand of the sin-born child was clasped in his. Old Roger Chillingworth followed. 'Hadst thou sought the whole earth over,' said he, looking darkly at the clergyman, 'there was no place so secret, no high place nor lowly place, where thou couldst have escaped me, save on this very scaffold.' 'Thanks be to Him who hath led me hither,' answered the minister. 'Is not this better,' murmured he, 'than what we dreamed of in the forest.' . . . It was revealed! while he stood with a flush of triumph in his face, as one who in the crisis of extremest pain had won a victory. Old Roger Chillingworth knelt down beside him with a dull blank countenance, out of which the life seemed to have departed—'Thou hast escaped me,' he repeated more than once. 'Thou hast escaped me.'"

The *Scarlet Letter* has doubtless for one of its objects—as moralists so far rightly insist—to exhibit the influence exerted by a single violation of social law on all the persons whom it concerns, wife, lover, husband, child. But it is shallow criticism to regard it as mainly, like Lockhart's *Adam Blair*,[1] a parable on the obligations of the Seventh Commandment, with the actual breach of which it is only incidentally connected. The real theme, as recognised by subtler insight, is not the sin itself, but the livelong consequences of trying to conceal it, of keeping up a show of

[1] Mr. James has clearly seen and unfolded the points of contact and contrast. He does not suggest, as indeed seems unlikely, that Mr. Hawthorne ever saw Lockhart's powerful but provincial story.

sanctity over a reality of weakness. The deeper moral is not only indicated, but in so many words pointed by the author himself—

"To the untrue man, the whole universe is false—it is impalpable—it shrinks to nothing in his grasp." . . . "Crime is for the iron-nerved, who have their choice either to endure it, or, if it press too hard, to exert their fierce and savage strength for a good purpose, and fling it off at once." "Among many morals which press upon us from the poor minister's miserable experience, we put only this into a sentence—Be true! Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst may be inferred."

In the concluding chapter of this, the most profound, the boldest, the most riveting analytical romance of our tongue, in our century—followed, I think, at an interval by *Wuthering Heights*, and by *Silas Marner*—the author goes farther, and trenches on the ground of George Sand's *Lelia* and Goethe's *Elective Affinities*. In these words he ventures, with Milton, to question the finality of some of our present domestic relations, commonly regarded as above or beyond dispute—

"Women . . . wasted, wronged, or erring . . . came to Hester's cottage, demanding why they were so wretched, and what was the remedy. Hester comforted and counselled them as best she might. She assured them too of her firm belief that, at some brighter period when the earth should have grown ripe for it, in Heaven's own time, a new truth would be revealed, in order to establish the whole relation between man and woman on a surer ground of mutual happiness."

It has been generally admitted that Puritanism was never so refined; less generally, that it has seldom been so assailed. Macaulay has no satire, on its asceticism, equal to the following:—

"Into this festal season of the year the Puritans compressed whatever mirth and public joy they deemed allowable to human infirmity; thereby so far dispelling the customary cloud, that for the space of a single holiday, they appeared scarcely more grave than most other communities at a period of general affliction."

The commonly exaggerated conception of Hawthorne's

Puritanism is due partly to his own loyalty to his ancestors, and to his high moral tone: the impression has perhaps been confirmed by his fierce rebuke to the "poor desecrated" Doctor of Divinity, recorded in the chapter of *The Old Home* entitled "Consular Experiences;" but, in the same chapter, he also records his regret for the severity of the rebuke. An English reviewer, whose artistic tastes are benumbed by infallible sermonising, says that our romancer "spends his strength on an adulterous mixture of emotions," "strung like a cobweb in front of a New England parlour." The characteristic criticism ignores the fact that the apparent inconsistency is due to the breadth of Hawthorne's mind. His work everywhere shows traces of a conflict between the Calvinism in which, with all its dismal features, he had been reared, and a strong revolutionary undercurrent fed by his modern culture and surroundings. Rich "spiritual blood" flowed in his veins to the last; but he had torn asunder the parchments of his fathers, ceased to wear the Tephalim, and so far emancipated himself from the belief in "the large comprehensiveness of the divine damnation," as to breathe a hope that even Roger Chillingworth's "stock of hatred and antipathy" might be hereafter "transmuted into golden love." *The House of the Seven Gables* is partly on the same lines: the life it brings before us is, still, New England life, though of a later date: it is the present, overcast by shadows of the past. The dogma of predestination is, by a moral Darwin, transmuted into the belief that "the wrong-doing of one generation lives into the successive ones." The story, turning partially on the relations of two hostile families, relies most on the marked individuality[1] of the characters, who cease to be metaphysical, and become national, types. It is conspicuous by its subtle humour, breadth of design, and

[1] Mr. James directs special attention to Uncle Venner as a genuine Yankee type.

the aerial atmosphere in which it is steeped. Its beauty is as real, but as incapable of seizure, as that of the soap-bubbles blown by Clifford from the arched window of the old house—

> "Little impalpable worlds were those soap-bubbles, with the big world depicted, in hues bright as imagination, on the nothing of their surface. It was curious to see how the passers-by regarded these brilliant fantasies, as they came floating down, and made the dull atmosphere imaginative about them. Some stopped to gaze, and perhaps carried a pleasant recollection of the bubbles onward as far as the street corner; some looked angrily upward, as if poor Clifford wronged them by setting an image of beauty afloat so near their dusty pathway. A great many put out their fingers or their walking-sticks to touch withal, and were perversely gratified, no doubt, when the bubble, with all its pictured earth and sky scene, vanished as if it had never been."

The House of the Seven Gables cannot vanish as if it had never been, for any critical contact; but it may be dimmed and dulled to its lovers, as to those who have yet to know it, by being dragged from the mellowed twilight, which steeps it, into the cold light of analytical day. Little else can, therefore, be done than to point to some of the separate flawless pieces of workmanship that go to complete the perfect artistic whole of Hawthorne's second great romance. "Romance" he is careful to call this, as all his other longer works, in order that he may claim that "latitude, both as to its fashion and material, which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a novel;" and nowhere does Hawthorne avail himself of this latitude with more consummate skill, or "mingle the marvellous . . . as a slight, delicate, and evanescent flavour," with greater felicity. The materialist and the supernaturalist may, each as he pleases, interpret the most striking events of the story: only once—in acknowledging the mesmeric influence of Holgrave on Phœbe—does the author make any demand on his readers' credulity. The strains of Alice's harpsichord, prophesying death in the family, are heard before the sudden end of Judge Pyncheon;

but we are allowed to believe that Clifford had touched the keys, and similarly, when the old colonel is found sitting dead in his chair, there is a hint of a skeleton hand seen on his throat, and an allusion to the rumoured avenging voice of the ghostly wizard Maule. There is little action in the story, which resembles rather one of Holgrave's daguerreotypes—a ray of sunshine that beats for a moment on the gloomy old house in the bye-street and is withdrawn again—than a succession of shifting kaleidoscopic views; but the chapters "Clifford and Phœbe," "The Pyncheon Garden," etc., detailing the quiet life of the three last Pyncheons in their mouldering ancestral home, are worth many sensational scenes. Clifford Pyncheon, "partly crazy and partly imbecile,—a ruin, a failure, as almost everybody is, though some in less degree, or less perceptibly than their fellows," passing his time, partly in the garden, gazing into the, to him, face-haunted waters of Maule's Well, or amusing himself with the proceedings of the wizened hens ("their crest was of lamentably scanty growth, in these latter days, but so oddly and wickedly analogous to Hepzibah's turban, that Phœbe, to the poignant distress of her conscience, but inevitably, was led to fancy a general resemblance betwixt these forlorn bipeds and her respectable relative"), partly at an arched window looking on to the street,—Clifford Pyncheon, seated one day at the last, is delighted by the appearance of an Italian barrel-organ boy, whose instrument is furnished with a case of mechanical figures that move to the music.

"The Italian turned a crank; and, behold! every one of these small individuals started into the most curious vivacity. The cobbler wrought upon a shoe; the blacksmith hammered his iron; the soldier waved his glittering blade; the lady raised a tiny breeze with her fan; the jolly toper swigged lustily at his bottle; a scholar opened his book, with eager thirst for knowledge, and turned his head to and fro; the milkmaid energetically drained her cow; and a miser counted gold into his strong box—all at the same turning of a crank. Yes; and, moved by the selfsame impulse, a lover saluted his mistress on her lips!

Possibly some cynic, at once merry and bitter, had desired to signify, in this pantomimic scene, that we mortals, whatever our business or amusement—however serious, however trifling—all dance to one identical tune, and, in spite of our ridiculous activity, bring nothing finally to pass. For the most ridiculous aspect of the affair was that at the cessation of the music everybody was petrified, at once, from the most extravagant life into a dead torpor. Neither was the cobbler's shoe finished, nor the blacksmith's iron shaped out; nor was there a drop less of brandy in the toper's bottle, nor a drop more of milk in the milkmaid's pail, nor one additional coin in the miser's strong box, nor was the scholar a page deeper in his book. All were precisely in the same condition as before they made themselves so ridiculous by their haste to toil, to enjoy, to accumulate gold, and to become wise. Saddest of all, moreover, the lover was none the happier for the maiden's granted kiss! But rather than swallow this last too acrid ingredient, we reject the whole moral of the show."

This little episode exhibits conspicuously the mingling of pathos and humour which is, in a peculiar degree, the portion of the *House of the Seven Gables*. Sometimes the humour is uppermost, as in the references to the family of fowls before alluded to, or in the relation of Hepzibah's struggles towards the arranging of her shop window "to tempt little boys into her premises;" while the balance is surely the other way when the author affirms of the Sybarite Clifford that "In his last extremity . . . he would doubtless press Hepzibah's hand, in fervent recognition of all her lavished love, and close his eyes; but not so much to die, as to be constrained to look no longer on her face!" Along with this exquisite handling of different but nearly-connected qualities, there is shown at various points of the story a weird and wonderful force; as in the relation by Holgrave to Phœbe of the legend of the bewitched Alice; or where Hepzibah, after wildly searching for him, discovers her brother at the door of the room, within which is his cousin's corpse. This scene, especially the account of Clifford's pale features, "so white through the glimmering passage" that it seemed as if a light fell on them alone; and his "gusty mirth," half heartless, half childish—"As for us we can dance now! we can sing, play,

laugh, do what we will! The weight is gone off this weary old world; and we may be as light-hearted as little Phœbe herself" —is full of finer touches than the somewhat theatrical, and constantly-quoted, ticking of the watch. The *House of the Seven Gables* is woven of thinner threads than its predecessor, but they are like those of Spenser's Arachne. Despite its ghostly scenes, it is the pleasantest of the author's works, the only one of his full-grown children that we dare regard as a playmate.

The community of Brook Farm was, by all accounts, free from reproach or blot: its morals were more akin to those of "Mount Lebanon" than those of Utah or of "Oneida Creek." But, as an adventure in social life, it would not have met with the approval of the Pilgrim Fathers, of Winthrop, Endicott, or Johnson. It was precisely adapted to interest the author of *The Scarlet Letter*. The old Puritanism was, to the higher class of minds, effete: society wanted some change, on which this experiment might throw at least a glimmer of light. He gave the answer habitual to his prevailing scepticism. The solution was not here: the experiment was a failure. His book is a record of Utopian vagaries, by an observer, not a sharer of them—a record in which recollections of what actually passed are mingled with fancies of what might have been. The amount of reality in the picture is frankly stated in the preface, where the author tells us that his community is merely "a theatre removed from the highway, where the creatures of his brain may play their phantasmagorical antics," and adds that their precise equivalents "never made their appearance at Brook Farm." There is no reason for declining to accept this statement: nothing gained in the attempt to identify his "high-spirited woman, bruising herself against the narrow limitations of her sex," with Margaret Fuller, or "the minor poet" too closely with himself. He is neither Miles Coverdale nor Clifford Pyncheon. The artistic temperament, the disbelief in "causes" expressed in

the remark that "no sagacious man will long retain his sagacity if he live exclusively among progressive people," is common to the three; but Hawthorne has neither the coldness and Caleb-Williams curiosity of the one, nor the utter selfishness of the other. *The Blithedale Romance* is no bundle of biographies: it has been more properly described as "a humanitarian ballet danced by four figures, who quarrel and dance out of tune." The central idea is, in this case, almost too obvious: the proposition to be proved is that the exaggeration of right may turn to wrong—*Summum jus, summa injuria.* It is *Measure for Measure* without the treason in Angelo's blood, though Hollingsworth is, in the result, as cruel as Angelo meant to be. Much of the work is a comment on the melancholy truth that "half the work of the wise is to counteract the mischief done by the good;" but the only wise man on the stage is Coverdale, and he is not strong enough: all he has to tell us in the end is, by his own confession, "Nothing, nothing, nothing!" Silas Foster interrupting the regenerators of society with the question, "Which man among you is the best judge of swine?" and the discovery, soon made by the masquerading Arcadians, that "intellectual activity is incompatible with any large amount of bodily exercise," point to the foregone conclusion. The descriptive skill displayed in the book is beyond praise. Nowhere has the author more successfully availed himself of his favourite trick of antithesis. The man whose life is ruined by too much, and the man whose life is an emptiness from too little, purpose; the magnificent Zenobia,—the most Titian-like figure on Hawthorne's canvas,—pulsing in every vein with passionate life, and the veiled lady, the pale "anemone," whose appearance in the drama is like the sigh of a flute in a rich orchestra; —these are not more strikingly contrasted than old Moodie, the frail shadow of Fauntleroy, and Westervelt, charlatan and "salamander"—people who seem to have walked

entire out of some unwritten novel of Balzac. The variety in the scenery is similarly enhanced by juxtaposition, as of the Hermitage and the Hotel, Elliot's Pulpit and the Boarding-house; just as the healthy atmosphere of the fields is set off by the miasmas of Mesmerism and Spiritualism, which, in this instance, represent the inevitable element of superstition. *The Blithedale Romance* has attracted an unusual amount of attention from French critics, owing to the interest taken by their countrymen in the social problem—a problem which it, however, suggests and sets aside rather than discusses, the references to Fourierism, etc., being mere interpolations cut short by Hollingsworth's dogmatism. The only point made plain is the baleful and blighting effect of the philanthropy that overrides private personal claims. The book is the tragedy of which Dickens' Mrs. Jellaby is the comedy; and it is the most dismal[1] ever written by the author, the only rays of light being the rustic scenes, and the impressive emancipation of Priscilla in the village hall. The finding of Zenobia's body is, perhaps, the most ghastly description in literature: it is aggravated to a climax by the horrible cynicism of Coverdale's remark, that had she foreseen "how ill it would become her, she would no more have committed the dreadful act than have exhibited herself in public in a badly-fitting garment." Time passes, and the impartial torturer meets the philanthropic bird of prey with the question, "Up to this moment, how many criminals have you reformed?" "No one," said Hollingsworth, with his eyes still fixed on the ground. "Ever since we parted, I have been busy with a single murderer." It is a fit close to the wreck of idealisms and the holocaust of aspirations, that leaves us with a deeper sense of the mockery of life, of more utter hopeless-

[1] Mr. James says it is "the lightest, the brightest, the liveliest, of that company of unhumorous fictions"(!) *The Blithedale Romance* is not unhumorous, but *Romeo and Juliet* is a comedy in comparison.

ness than any other English work of fiction, excepting perhaps *Middlemarch.*

There is less need to dilate on the *Marble Faun,* because it has already received a full share of attention and adequate justice from English critics, possibly because the ground is more familiar to them. Though the author's longest, it is not his most elaborate, romance, being largely filled out with the descriptions to whose excellence I have already referred. The plot is more confused than that of its predecessors: it is more difficult to believe that many of the events could have occurred; *e.g.* even in a country of defective police arrangements it is impossible that the murder should have been so hushed up. The supernatural trenches more nearly on the fantastic, the air of unreality thickens, the contrast with Scott culminates. In reading *Transformation,*[1] we feel as if we had lost solid footing, or had left the high road to stumble over pebbles, made slippery by seaweed. Of the author's works this most justifies the *caveat* that his "*forte* lies rather in the analysis of character and situations than in the dramatic arrangement of events." His almost magical alchemy is conspicuous in all that relates to Donatello, the masterpiece undoubtedly of the book; nor is the writer's skill anywhere more surprising than in his handling of this half-human creature, who, as Mr. Leslie Stephen truly remarks, "trembles on the very verge of the grotesque, and yet is made to walk through its pages with undeviating grace." As surely as some rockets fall in colour-contrasted streams, so surely has Hawthorne his opposed female types—separated in Hester and Phœbe, side by side in Zenobia and Priscilla, Miriam and Hilda—the burning cactus and the lily: in richness and purity of tint the last group are in no respect inferior to the others; but their coming and going is more mysterious. The incident in

[1] The English publisher's title of the book, to which, however, from its association with the Pantomime, the author objected.

Hilda's career that we best remember is her seeking relief from the knowledge of another's crime in the Confessional: of Miriam's, of course, the moment of the catastrophe. "Did you not mean that he should die?" addressed to her from the lips of Donatello, rivals the subtlety of Dante. The central conception of the book is in some respects the converse of that which pervades the *Blithedale Romance*. Francis W. Newman, in his interesting treatise with the sentimental title, *The Soul, her Sorrows and Aspirations*, makes a remark to the effect that a cold nature may be lifted above its former self by committing a great sin. Hawthorne accepts this idea in his account of the Doctor of Divinity at Liverpool, and has made it the ethical basis of the Faun's history—designed to exhibit the effect which an impulsive crime may have in inspiring a simple instinctive nature with a stronger life: it is a transformation like that which gave a soul to Undine; but effected less innocently, by guilt and love conjoined. The doctrine certainly requires the caution, as Mr. Newman indicates, that a sin committed of malice prepense would fail of its end, more completely than the deliberate pursuit of pleasure fails; but to call it "Manichæan"—with the national reviewer before adduced—is merely to invoke prejudice; and to blame the romancer for "playing with dangerous things and suspected ideas" is to attempt to confine him to the orthodox platitudes of ordinary life.

Mr. Hawthorne's criticisms of Art in this volume (as in his Notebooks) are sometimes open to cavil; nor is he very successful as a critic of actual life. His panegyric on Pierce was so much belied by the event that on his return to America he was advised to ignore the President, but of course scorned the poltroonery, and dedicated to him *The Old Home*. Of this volume I have already spoken.[1] There is nothing in our language finer as regards style than much of the book, and

[1] See Chapter I.

hardly anything more pathetic than the account of poor Delia Bacon hovering like a ghost about Shakespeare's tomb. Mr. Leslie Stephen, who admits that Charles Lamb could not have improved the descriptions of the hospital at Leicester or Charlecote Park, complains that the great romancer in his assaults on our ponderosity has been deceived by the image of John Bull—an image that has hidden us from ourselves as well as from our neighbours; adding, "His sympathy with the deep vein of poetic imagination that underlies all our steaks and sirloins is intercepted by this detestable lay figure," and that his dogged patriotism makes him "afraid of loving England too well." This is more than half true, and doubtless in the nation called London there is even more variety of feature and character than in Paris or New York; but it is otherwise in our provinces, and, returning from Florence or Boston to Bristol or Glasgow, we can at least understand the judgment pronouncing Sidney and Nelson to have been somewhat exceptional British models. Hawthorne, like most visitors, resented the *hauteur* which makes our upper-middle-class travellers the worst in the world. His nearest approach to rancour is a sentence in the dedication to this volume, which, however, is not only excusable, but calculated to convey a lesson to both nations. "Not an Englishman of them all ever spared America, for courtesy's sake or kindness; nor, in my opinion, would it contribute in the least to our mutual advantage and comfort were we to besmear one another all over with butter and honey." There is, after all, very little in *The Old Home* that is unpleasant, and of that still less that even trenches on the outer verge of legitimate criticism—the only objectionable passage being one about the physique of Englishwomen, in which the writer is unlike himself. The defect of the book, as intimated at starting, lies rather in the isolation of its sketches and its want of general grasp, than in any, even unconscious, injustice.

Nathaniel Hawthorne's influence as a teacher and artist is not likely soon to fade: his finest fancies have crept into "our study of imagination" and abide there. Hester and Pearl by the forest brook; Dimmesdale, with the morning light on his brow; the procession of dead kinsmen, closing with the apparition of himself, before the dead Judge; the Cleopatra of Brook Farm flinging down her gage to Hollingsworth; the hideous upheaval of the old log in the pool; the flash in Miriam's eye; the flight of Hilda's doves; the sparkle in Donatello's wine—are stamped in letters of fire or gold on the page of his country's literature, and the music of his quiet sentences still lingers on the ear of friends or strangers. Nowhere is his American historical enthusiasm more graphically illustrated than in the *Grey Champion*, and the Rembrandt-like procession at the close of *Howe's Masquerade*. "The actors," he writes, as with a grim Puritan smile,—"the actors in the scene have vanished into deeper obscurity than even that wild Indian band who scattered the tea-ships on the waves, and gained a place in history, yet left no names. But superstition, among other legends in this mansion, repeats the wondrous tale, that on the anniversary night of Britain's discomfiture the ghosts of the ancient governors of Massachusets still glide through the portal of the Province House." But in the politics of the present he seldom took a side: when he did so he chose amiss, and wrecked himself, for practical influence on his contemporaries, with the Democrats. By his own repeated confession, he regarded the curse of slavery as "one of those evils which divine Providence does not leave to be remedied by human contrivances." He had no sympathy with the Abolitionists of the North, calling their zeal a philanthropic mist: he had at least a half sympathy with the Southern planters. He had no clear faith in the future. "As regards human progress," he writes in *Blithedale*, "let them believe it who can and aid it who choose; if I could

earnestly do either it would be all the better for my comfort." In the preface to the *Faun*, he reminds us, as his excuse for laying the scene in Italy, "that no author, without a trial, can conceive of the difficulty of writing a romance about a country where there is no shadow, no antiquity, no mystery, no picturesque and gloomy wrong, nor anything but a commonplace prosperity, in broad and simple daylight, as is happily the case with my dear native land. Romance and Poetry, ivy and lichens and wallflowers, need ruins to make them grow." Hawthorne lived to see the beginning of what he could only regard as ruin; he did not live to see his country rising, stronger and better, after a great struggle with a gloomy wrong.

His career is no perfect pattern; but it says, amid the noise and scuffle by which we are beset and distracted, "Audi alteram partem"—the old Manse against Broadway or the Strand. *Integer vitæ*, he envied no one, he jostled with no one, he never tried to outstrip anybody. When drawn out of his shell he was more disposed to resist than to float with the headlong currents of his age; when he had taken his stand no personal considerations made him change or yield. His example is a protest against patriotism degenerating into bluster, and the literary spirit sacrificing itself by diffusive energy. Content for forty-six years to remain unknown beyond his narrow circle, the outcome of his pensive labour is summed in a few story-books—about a tenth in bulk of those of Mr. Anthony Trollope; but they will endure among the typical creations of the century. A quietist in a turbulent community, an artist in a world of factories, he gained his position because he knew himself and his work,—because he recognised the value of concentration, and calm, as opposed alike to mere industrialism and to blatant omniscience. A wide culture should be mainly regarded as an indefinite enlargement of the appreciative powers. There have been

few Da Vincis and Galileos, born to excite our "wonder, love, and praise;" many admirable Crichtons, who have left behind them little else than the reputation of unproductive versatility. Let each be, as far as in him lies, equipped on all sides as a listener: as speakers or actors let us find our strength and husband it. If we are financiers, do not let us imagine that our fiats will dispel all the difficulties of theology. If metaphysicians, the chances are against our being administrators, orators, or lyrists: if novelists, against our being at the same time competent historians, biographers, preachers, and critics. Let us, above all, row rather against than with the tide; and, remembering that "popularity is for dolls," bide our time. These are the lessons of the life and writings of Nathaniel Hawthorne.

CHAPTER XI.

RECENT AMERICAN NOVELISTS.

"SAINTE BEUVE," says the most popular living American novelist, "wrote upon Balzac two or three times, but always with striking and inexplicable inadequacy." Considering that Sainte Beuve was the most subtle French critic of our generation, the remark is discouraging. In matters of literature, Americans are like crustaceans[1] deprived of their shells: they shrink from the slightest touch: to satisfy them is impossible. The physical construction of most novelists is similar. They have much of the imagination, all the sensitivity, of the poet, without the elevation, the confidence delusive or real, which makes him rely on his audience, "fit though few," and on a retributive posterity. Like the actor or the orator, if the novelist fails to enlist the sympathies, or to secure the approbation, of the men around him, he falls, seldom to rise again. His or her—we must accentuate the distinction in a department which women have made peculiarly their own, and in which they have achieved their greatest literary triumphs—his or her primary

[1] "It is," says Mr. James, "I think, an indisputable fact that Americans are, as Americans, the most self-conscious people in the world, and the most addicted to the belief that the other nations of the earth are in a conspiracy to undervalue them. They are conscious of being the youngest of the great nations, of not being of the European family, of being placed on the circumference of the circle of civilisation, etc."—*Memoir of Hawthorne*, p. 153.

purpose is to amuse the leisure or stir the passions of contemporaries: to edify or to instruct is secondary. The novelists of the day are the successors and heirs of the dramatists: *their* works are the abstracts and chronicles of the time: they aspire to hold up the mirror to nature: they compete with the occupants of the pulpit, in being the ministers of morals; with the artist, in exhibiting models of manners, or of dress. Finally, their Art is comparatively new. The latest and most portentous literary birth, it threatens, like Aaron's rod, to swallow up the rest. A good or successful novelist has a thousand readers for the historian's hundred, for the metaphysician's one. He is the millionaire of literature, with something of the democratic intolerance for the half-outlawed, more ancient, owners of the land. His jealousy is intensified by the uneasy feeling of being often found in questionable company, and having his fame liable to contemptuous travesty. He is an essentially popular writer in an age when popular writing is being run to ridicule; and no greatness of masterdom is security that, after his death, his best works may not be boiled down, emasculated, deformed, and sold in pots for a penny.[1]

The germs of the English novel have been found in the Elizabethan age, in Sidney's *Arcadia*, or Lilly's *Euphues;* in the Norman-French *fabliaux* and chivalrous tales: they have even been traced back to the ecclesiastical anecdotes of the Middle Age, or the yet older romances of declining Latinity; but the real birth of our modern novel is in the eighteenth century; when, first, in the hands of Richardson, Fielding, and Smollett, it became a real power and secured a distinct status. When a branch of art is late, sound criticism about it is sure to be much later: the canons have still to be fixed by which to measure the new lines, and try the new spirits.

[1] I, of course, refer especially to the late disgraceful mutilation of Sir Walter Scott by Miss Braddon.

Scientific or rational criticism of landscape painting almost dates from the publication of the *Modern Painters;* for the Ruskin of novelists we have to wait; and the ultimate appeal between the works of Henry Fielding and Mrs. Radcliffe, of "George Eliot" and Mrs. Craik, of "George Sand" and Eugene Sue, of Nathaniel Hawthorne and "Mark Twain," seems, by the bookseller's register, still to be the appeal to the palate, on the choice of a dish. "I like this, I do not like that, but why I can never tell; because I shall never know."

The difficulty of dealing, philosophically, with a comparatively recent development of literature is intensified when we leave our own country for another, where, as yet, comparatively few standards of Art are universally recognised. The still somewhat chaotic conditions of a new society impose a special restraint on the critic, who endeavours to gauge the accuracy with which the portrait-painters of the people have drawn their portraits; nor, as we intimated at starting, is the difficulty removed by the brief experience alone attainable by most visitors. The mere traveller is offended on the ground of political or social discrepancies; or he is flattered by the graces of a hospitality nowhere surpassed: he sees men and things *en deuil,* or he sees them in rose; and is in neither case a reliable judge. In venturing to estimate the imaginative products of a country dominated by the descendants of our race, we have to bear in mind that the United States are yet far from being wholly English: they are also German and Irish; in a minor degree, French, Spanish, and Italian; and, for good or ill in policy and art, more continental, *i.e.* less insular than we are. The subjects which their authors have undertaken to illustrate have a wider range than ours, and their manner of treatment is less trammelled by authority. This element of variety, conspicuous in the novelists of the West, makes an exhaustive classifica-

tion impossible: we can only with proximate accuracy formulate their characteristics; but in the later, as in the earlier, period, some general features are manifest.

The influence of external Nature, paramount in the prose and verse of the first quarter of the century, is still notable in the third. With few exceptions, in the American romances of the last thirty years, too much space is allotted to the comparatively commonplace incidents of the railroad, the steamboat, or the phæton (the *Wedding Tour* of Mr. Howells consists of little else); too many words are given to sunset and sunrise, to river reach and mid-Atlantic storm, to Venetian lagoon and Alpine ridge. The multitude of modern books of travel is aggravating. In a few cases they are justified by freshness of incident or remoteness of scene: in the majority, they are products of people to whom everything new seems marvellous, or who are so incontinent that they cannot breathe the fresh air on a lake or a hill, or visit a ruin, without endeavouring to communicate what is incommunicable. The delight of the country consists in great measure in its comparatively vestal repose: we do not want to have our fresh sensations disturbed or debased by commonplace, or our chance of rest in some discovered nook undone by popular advertisement. But a professed book of travel is at least honest. What we may complain of is a series of second rate dissolving views, under pretence of a novel; which should be an imaginary history or biography, intensified to a prose drama by rapidity of action and exposition of interesting character. Ordinary description or sketching is so easy that the facility deludes half-competent persons into the belief that they can write or draw. Their remedy is to study Turner, or Wordsworth, or Ruskin, or Scott, or Hawthorne, in whose masterpieces, of brush or pen, outlines of strictest accuracy are bathed in a transfiguring light. Description is like a pony on which children learn to

ride: unfortunately it is in danger of being ridden to death by full-grown Americans at Rome, and by adult Scotchmen among the Hebrides.

The first era of imaginative writing in the West, is, as we have seen, further characterised by the love of adventure: the second is no less distinctly marked by the love of analysis. On most of the products of the latter period, not purely narrative, we find the stamp of the Transcendental movement: they are introspective to excess, and frequently pathological. This influence is apparent in Oliver Wendell Holmes, to whom we have referred as a poet, and to whom we shall have to return as a humorist. Born in 1809, this accomplished wit and physician made his literary *début* in a series of miscellaneous papers published in 1830; and, after a residence abroad, preceded Emerson by a year in delivering the annual essay to the Phi-Beta-Kappa Society. In 1847 he was appointed to the Professorship of Anatomy at Harvard: in 1852, he gave a celebrated course of lectures on the modern English poets: in 1859 he contributed to the Atlantic Monthly the psychological romance of *Elsie Venner*. This, on the whole his masterpiece, is certainly his most original work; though the heroine has been inevitably compared to the Lamia of tradition and of Keats; but it has the inequality of execution apt to attach to all the performances of an adventurer, however brilliant, in so many fields. The artistic effect of Holmes's depth of insight and genuine sympathy is impaired by an almost tiresome, frequently flippant, smartness; and the range of his characters, those at least of more than mere local interest, is limited. Exception has been taken to the somewhat obtrusive manner in which, at starting, the hero, Bernard Langdon, is vaunted as a type of the "Brahmin caste" of New England.[1] But there is no

[1] This is enlarged upon in the able but over-severe review in the "National," Oct. 1861.

reason to doubt that a republic may have its intellectual Aristocracy, or that there, as elsewhere, the qualities of "blue-blood"—refinement, courage, frankness, loyalty, and decision—may belong to inherited culture. Langdon's encounter, in his early experience as a schoolmaster, with the hulking Abner Briggs, is as natural as his victory, and this applies to the other passages of his career. Dick Venner, the half-bred "Portugee," with his mustang and attempted murder, is as fairly drawn as most villains of romance: Helen Darley, an attractive type of the best class of New England schoolmistresses; and Dudley Venner of the physically and mentally-weak, but withal high-souled, gentleman. The vulgar people—Sproule and Sloper and Silas Peckham, especially the last—are revoltingly life-like (though in such portraits we always miss the master-hand of Dickens), and the clergymen, Fairweather and Honeywood, as true to nature as the author's bias against their profession will permit them to be. The interest of the story, to an unusual degree, centres in, or round, the main figure. Elsie Venner, whose mother had been bitten by a rattle-snake, has drunk in the poison as a Mithridate. She becomes a snake-charmer, with the same mysterious relations to the reptile as Donatello to the faun-world, visits the adders in their graphically-described mountain haunts, plays with them like dolls, over-fascinates them with her "diamond-eyes," and similarly allures all the "human mortals" with whom she comes in contact, while often making them shiver by her touch. Some of the incidents in her story are doubtless incredible, but she is less repulsive than her mythological prototypes; and it is a defective sympathy, that does not mourn over the unrequited love, which at once brings her back to common day and closes her strange career. The book is one of the numerous American class which should be compared, not with the standard realistic English novel, but with the fantasies and

fiery tales of Fouqué, Musæus, and Tieck; and we should be unwilling to lose any one of the group. The essential sameness, often a counterpoise, of impatient versatility, appears in the fact that Dr. Holmes in his other romance, *The Guardian Angel*, changes the properties rather than the persons of his limited stage. Here again the leading idea is that of Destiny made true by transmitted qualities. It is a second weird story of physical and mental affinities, wrought out on similar lines with less of the distinctly-supernatural, but more of the painfully-anatomical element, as in the account of the heroine's hysteria. The "drop of aboriginal blood" in her ancestress, and the Italian air, over her cradle, correspond closely to the adder's bite: the plot is only modified by her marriage with the hero, instead of her death, in the *denoûment*. Myrtle Hazard is Elsie Venner, with a difference. The same fascinating impishness, or spritehood, in both is allayed by a similar healing or converting process. Clement Lindsay is Langdon, with more genius, but hardly so much character. The Withers' takes the place of the Dudley stock. Mr. William Murray Bradshaw is, like Dick Venner, the defeated scamp, with the same motives, pelf, and a dash of passion; though his means are purloining a will, instead of throwing a lasso. The devoted old nurses are facsimiles, with a change of colour; and Miss Susan Posey is a repetition of Bertram's Rosa. There are some new types—Byles Grindley, the childless Guardian Angel, in lifelong weeds for his stillborn book, yet shrewd and decisive as a knight-errant of daily life; the worthy old cats, Cynthia Badlum and Kitty Fagan; Miss Silence, the incarnation of the rigid Calvinism, against which the author nowhere more vehemently tilts; the nonagenarian Dr. Halibut; the Rev. Mr. Stoker, an unpleasant amalgam of Arthur Dimmesdale and Charles Honeyman; and the gifted Hopkins, poetaster and plagiarist, whose crowning merit

was, by the provincial papers, admitted to be originality. Both books assert their right to exist by their geniality, frequent incisiveness, and recognition of the sun and shadow blended in the warp and woof of life. Though both are here and there marred by professional pedantry, the lesson in each is humanising; but in both we have the same grain, ground, somewhat too swiftly to be ground small, in the same mill. The most striking single scenes in the two books are the inverted rescues of Langdon by Elsie, in the hollow haunted by the snakes, and of Myrtle by Clement, after shooting the rapids. In short space more justice will be done to the author by selecting some of the always suggestive and sometimes brilliant *mots*, in which he perhaps too freely indulges—

"Certificates are for the most part like ostrich eggs; the giver never knows what is hatched out of them." "Conscience itself requires a conscience, or nothing can be more unscrupulous. It told Saul that he did well in persecuting the Christians. It has goaded countless multitudes of various creeds to endless forms of self-torture. . . . Our libraries are crammed with books written by spiritual hypochondriacs, which should be transferred to studios of insanity." "All our other features are made for us, but a man makes his own mouth." "The woods at first convey an impression of profound repose, and yet if you watch their ways with open ear you find the life which is in them is restless and nervous as that of a woman." "I suppose we must punish evildoers as we extirpate vermin; but I don't know that we have any more right to judge them than we have to judge rats and mice." "Men are tattooed with their special beliefs like so many South Sea Islanders, but a human heart beats under all the patterns." "He took as his text, 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?' and began to write his sermon, afterwards so famous, 'On the Obligations of an Infinite Creator to a Finite Creature.'" "If a man has a genuine, sincere, hearty wish to get rid of his liberty, if he is really bent on becoming a slave, nothing can stop him. Liberty is often a heavy burden on a man. It involves that necessity for perpetual choice, which is the kind of labour men have always dreaded. In common life we shirk it by forming habits. . . . In politics party organisation saves us the pains of much thinking." "There are people who think that everything may be done if the doer, be he educator or physician, be only called 'in season.' No doubt; but 'in season' would often be a hundred or two years before the child was

born." "From forty to fifty a man must move upward, or the natural falling off in the vigour of life will carry him rapidly downward." "Ministers work out the machinery of responsibility in an abstract kind of way; they have a kind of Algebra of human nature, in which friction and strength or weakness of material are left out." "A man is stunned by a blow with a stick on the head, he becomes unconscious; another man gets a harder blow on the head from a bigger stick, and it kills him. Does he become unconscious too? If so, when does he come to his consciousness?" "A man may love his own soul too well." "The physician whose face reflects his patient's condition like a mirror may do well enough to examine people for a life insurance office, but does not belong to the sickroom." "A gentleman says 'Yes' to a great many things without stopping to think; a shabby fellow is known by his caution in answering questions, for fear of compromising his pocket or himself." "He had a good deal in him of what he used to call the old man, meaning thereby certain qualities tending to make a man beloved by his weak and erring fellow-mortals." "We often move to the objects of supreme curiosity or desire, not in the lines of castle or bishop on the chess-board, but with the knight's zig-zag, at first in the wrong direction." "There is a worm in every young soul, Myrtle, as there is a worm in that leaf. But there is not a worm in *every* leaf, Miss Cynthia. Are there never any worms in leaves after they get old and yellow?" "Plenty of basements, Grindley used to say, without attics and skylights. Plenty of skylights without rooms enough and space enough below. But here was a three-storey brain." "A powerful preacher is open to the same sense of enjoyment that a great tragedian feels when he curdles the blood of his audience . . . But the tragedian who is fearful as Richard or as Iago finds that no hindrance to his success in the part of Romeo." "People think the confessional is unknown in our Protestant Churches; it is a great mistake: the principal change is that there is no screen between the penitent and the father-confessor." "There is plenty of religious raving that is nothing but hysterics. Mr. Froude thinks that was the trouble of Bloody Queen Mary." "Where there is one man who squints with his eyes, there are a dozen who squint with their brains." "Idols and dogmas in place of character; pills and theories in place of wholesome living: see the histories of theology and medicine *passim*." "Look at the flower of a morning-glory the evening before the dawn which is to see it unfold. The delicate petals are twisted into a spiral which, at the appointed hour, when the sunlight touches the hidden springs of its life, will uncoil itself and let the day into the chamber of its virgin heart. But the spiral must unwind by its own law, and the hand that shall try to hasten the process will only spoil the blossom which would have expanded in symmetrical beauty under the rosy fingers of morning."

A slightly junior contemporary of Holmes is the author of

one of those books destined, like Horne's *Orion* and Wells' *Joseph and his Brethren*, to be admired and praised by an appreciative circle, and remain "caviare to the general." SYLVESTER JUDD, born in Massachusetts, 1813, was in his early years diverted from the pursuit of business by a religious revival, and went to study at Yale for the orthodox ministry. Having at a later date altered his views, he transferred his attendance to Harvard, and in 1840 began to occupy the Unitarian pulpit in Maine, the duties of which he continued to discharge till his death in 1853. In 1845 he issued his *Margaret, a Tale of the Real and the Ideal;* designed, by his own account, to "promote the cause of a liberal Christianity" (thereby filling "a gap long left open in Unitarian literature, that of imaginative writings"), "to subject bigotry, cant, pharisaism and all intolerance . . . to preserve some reminiscences of the age of our immediate fathers; and to embody the features and improve the character of our own favoured region." The patriotic strain of the last clause pervades the volume, largely consisting of dialogue, and finds expression through the lips of the speaker who represents the author's views. In the following passage of sweeping panegyric, his often unchastened style and untamed enthusiasm are alike conspicuous :—

"There are no faeries in our meadows and no elves to spirit away our children. Our wells are drugged by no saints. Our rivers harbour no nereids. . . . In the clefts of our rocks abide the souls of no heroes . . . nor are our mountains the seats of any gods. . . . The valley of the Housatonic is beautiful as the Vale of Tempe, or of Cashmere, and as oracular. We have no resorts for pilgrims, no shrines for the devout, no summits looking into Paradise . . . no chapels or abbeys, no broken arches, no castled crags. . . . Robin Goodfellow is unknown, and the Devil haunts our theology, not our houses. . . . No hideous ghosts appear at cock-crowing. . . . Astrology, Alchemy, and Necromancy are fast dying out, and Animal Magnetism has not ventured to cross the sea . . . Manitou is gone . . . the One God supervenes; there is no mediation but Christ, and for man the bars are let down."

As we read the bulk of this we cannot help answering out of Schiller's lament for the "entgötterte Natur;" and the chorus in *Faust* rings in our ears—

"Weh! Weh!
Du hast sie zerstört
Die schöne Welt."

It is the best and first, though unconscious, apology, for the comparative barrenness and hardness of New England thought, up to the author's time: it anticipates Hawthorne, whose first considerable work appeared five years later, in affirming that America is not yet ripe for romance. Margaret asks, "So you think New Englanders are the best people on the earth?" and Evelyn with a fine effrontery replies:—

"I think they might become such; or rather I think they might lead the August Procession of the race to Human Perfectability; that here might be revealed the coming of the day of the Lord, wherein the old Heavens of sin and error should be dissolved and a New Heavens and a New Earth be established, wherein dwelleth righteousness. I see nothing to prevent them from reassuming the old Hyperionic type . . . crowding out Jupiter and Mars, Diana and Venus (!) . . . New England! my birthplace, my chosen pilgrimage, I love it: its earth and its sky and the souls of its people. They, the Unconquerable, could alone subdue its ruggedness, and they are alone worthy to enjoy its amenities. I love the old folks and the children; I love the enterprise of its youth and honourable toil of its manhood. I love its snows and its grass, its hickory fires and its corn bread. The seeds of infinite good and of eternal truth are already sown in many minds. . . . High Calculation, which is only the symbol of a higher Moral Sense, is even now at work; and they are ripping up the earth for a canal from Worcester to Providence."

I should hesitate to quote the bathos of the close, as doing injustice to the writer; but the juxtaposition or overlapping of the strictly practical[1] and the ideal, almost the mystic, is equally characteristic of his nation and of his book. Judd belongs to the second period of American thought—that affected by Transcendentalism: he is an evident student of Emerson and the Dial: while he was writing, the experiment

[1] See Note on Practical Religion at end of volume.

of following the plough in the morning and reading Plato in the afternoon was being made at Brook Farm. Unable individually to take part in that adventure he went back to the past, and in his *Mons Christi* constructed a Utopia of the Revolution days, inspired by a deeper religious fervour. *Margaret* is, in one aspect, a farrago of opinions, dissertations, discussions on theology, politics, art, and society, often suggestive, sometimes fantastical—all inspired by the spirit of a man who had passed through the fire of a Revival, a man so defiant of the fashions of the world that, when, a few years later, he was called on to offer thanksgiving for the victories of the Mexican war, he read to his congregation the "Lamentations of Jeremiah." His book has another side, and to most its charm will be found chiefly to consist in the fresh and powerful delineations of New England life, in which it abounds. Judd's eye for external nature is almost as keen as Thoreau's, whom, in his description of the Maine Woods, he often forestalls. Probably the most graphic account of a snowstorm in English is that which fills the whole of the seventeenth chapter. The imagery is as fine as any in Whittier or *The Luggie* of David Gray; and it derives new human interest from the picture of the child half buried in the midst of it. The Indian episodes bear comparison with Cooper's: the fireside scenes —as of *The Thanksgiving* and the fatal *Husking Bee*,—are equally vivid; their accuracy is attested by those familiar with the habits of the people, whose characters are so drawn as to make us not only believe in but remember them. Margaret, whose mental progress is the professed theme of the book, is a fascinating figure; and her brother Chilion, the inspired violinist, to whose tragic fate the comparatively slender thread of the plot conducts us through the labyrinth, is a distinct poetic creation. The following is in a different style from the foregoing extract:—

"Only at the hour of his death did I understand the feelings of

his life. He came out like the sun at the close of a cloudy day, glittered, and expired. His music always thrilled me, as I have seen it blow many about like leaves in the wind. His violin was truly oracular, orphean, superhuman. Through it I am sure he would have communicated much of the hidden secrecy of the soul. Reserved in manner, hesitating in speech, his instrument became his confidence, his utterance, his communicable self. An inexplicability took him from us. Soul of Chilion, descend into my soul. If tears were song, I would sing thee over the world: when I have ceased to weep, I only pray there may remain strength enough to sing. Yet, like an unapproachable star, his light descends to me from distant regions. There are many in whose hearts he silently sank, and upon whom he scattered his wild but divine musical seeds. Without putting forth a hand, his designs have been moulded into the beautiful forms of Art."

Mr. Lowell, in our frequent guide, the *Fable for Critics*, testifies to his appreciation of this long anonymous and yet undeservedly-obscure romance—

> "There goes, but *stet nominis umbra*, his name
> You'll be glad enough, some day or other to claim,
> And will all crowd about him and swear that you knew him,
> If some English hack-critic should chance to review him,
> The old "*porcos ante ne projiciatis*
> *Margaritas*," for him you have verified *gratis*.
> What matters his name . . . 'tis enough that I look
> On the author of *Margaret*, the first Yankee book,
> With the soul of Down East in't and things farther East,
> As far as the threshold of morning at least;
> Where awaits the fair dawn of the simple and true,
> Of the day that comes slowly to make all things new."

Margaret—on the whole, the most suggestive of the numerous class of American didactic novels—is one of the not unfrequent works refuting the maxim that desert, sooner or later, gets its due. Merit is only among the causes that conduce to literary success; to ensure which, genius, short of the highest, often requires longevity, like that of Dryden, if not of Carlyle: the former had achieved little of value; the latter was still practically unrecognised, at the age when Mr. Judd died. It must, however, be admitted that Judd's comparative failure is owing to the defects, as well as to some of the excel-

lences, of his work—to its want of form, its over-ambitious aims, as well as to its heterodoxy of sentiment, and disregard of prejudice. A rapid and wide popularity can, by a previously unknown author, only be secured by clearness and precision of style; and by his being in essential sympathy with a multitude of ordinary intelligences. To avoid straining their attention, he must not disdain commonplace; but endeavour to obtain a reputation for originality, by appealing, in trenchant phrases, or by picturesque situations, to the best part of their average nature—above all, to their capacity for laughter or tears. He will be most immediately effective if he contrives to satirise a minority; to lead an attack on a vice growing out of favour; to denounce a party which has fallen behind, or shot before, the ranks. In religious and social morals he must be liberally conservative: in politics an optimist. All these conditions are combined in perhaps the most popular tale of the century; and they go a great way to explain its being so. In 1852, three works of fiction—two in America, and one in England—appeared nearly simultaneously:—*Esmond, The Blithedale Romance,* and *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* The two former (the first being the author's artistic masterpiece) met with only a moderate, the last with an enthusiastic, reception: 350,000 copies were sold in the States, probably as many in Europe, and its publication was talked of as a national event. "I forgot to put a nigger into my book," sneered Thackeray. Hawthorne said nothing, but published no other novel for seven years. Mrs. Beecher Stowe, mistaking, as was natural, the main causes of her success, followed it up with a series of literary failures; none of which has, in this hemisphere at least, attracted attention, save the vulgarly-sensational article in "Macmillan's Magazine," the undesigned result of which has been to cast aspersions on the sanity of a once celebrated, and long universally respected, English lady.

Detailed examination of a book so notorious, and so frequently reviewed, as *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, were manifestly a work of supererogation: but it must be acknowledged to have some conspicuous merits. The tact of the writer is apparent in her choice of subject, her talent in the treatment of it. Her story appeared at exactly the right time: it was in harmony with the passion on the winning side of an obviously impending struggle; and it gave voice to a suffering race, in a manner peculiarly acceptable to a philanthropic age. It was a definite thrust at an anachronistic crime; and its aggressive strength, increased by some of the unscrupulousness attaching to most political movements, made it really among the torches that lighted up the gunpowder magazine of the war. The mere style of the book is mediocre: it wants unity, consisting of a series of scenes, on different-coloured paper, stitched together; but the best characters, as those of St. Clair, Miss Ophelia, and Topsy, are drawn with fidelity and force, and some of the incidents, especially—Eliza's escape over the ice; Mrs. Bird giving away, for charity's sake, the little articles of dress of her dead child; Eva's efforts to induce Topsy to be good; the Quaker pulling on his boots, and bracing himself to resistance of the law; the whole episode of Cassy and Legree; exhibit some real dramatic humour and pathos. It has been observed that the original authorities for some of the keenest touches —as Topsy's "S'pose I grow'd,"—are found as simple facts in the after-published *Key;* but the power to select and set well, if not that of creative imagination, must be granted to the writer. Her production has the air, and much of the reality, of a simple narrative, not compiled for mere artistic purposes: it seems to be a precise, though somewhat crude, *résumé* of observations on the black world. Mrs. Stowe's religious views—like those of her brother, the vigorous, though often tasteless, pulpit and platform orator, Henry

Ward Beecher,—earnest, and yet comparatively broad, also enlisted the favour of an audience, the majority of whom were like-minded.

The following extract, less familiar than most of the more thrilling scenes, illustrates her best manner :—

"'Dr. G. preached a splendid sermon !' said Marie. 'It was just such a sermon as you ought to hear ; it expressed all my views exactly.'

"'It must have been very improving,' said St. Clair. 'The subject must have been an extensive one.'

"'Well, I mean all my views about society and such things,' said Marie. The text was, "He hath made everything beautiful in its season ;" and he showed how all the orders and distinctions in society came from God, and that it was so appropriate, you know, and beautiful, that some should be high and some low, and that some were born to rule and some to serve, and all that, you know : and he applied it so well to all this ridiculous fuss about slavery, and he proved distinctly that the Bible was on our side, and supported all our institutions so convincingly—I only wish you'd heard him.'

"'Oh, I don't need it,' said St. Clair ; 'I can learn what does me as much good from the Picayune any time, and smoke a cigar besides, which I can't do, you know, in church. . . . I'm such a graceless dog that these religious aspects of such subjects don't edify me.'

. . . . . .

"'I do think, Augustine, you are so irreverent,' said Marie ; 'I think it's shocking to hear you talk.'

"'Shocking ! it's the truth. Why don't they carry this religious talk on such matters a little further, and show the beauty in its season of a fellow's taking a glass too much, and sitting a little too late over his cards and various providential arrangements of that sort, which are pretty frequent among us young men ; we'd like to hear that those are right and godly too.'

. . . . . .

"'That's just the way he's always talking,' said Marie. 'You can't get any satisfaction out of him. I believe it's just because he don't like religion that he's always running out in this way he's been doing.'

"'Religion !' said St. Clair. 'Religion ! Is what you hear at church, religion ? Is that which can bend and turn, and descend and ascend, to fit every crooked phase of selfish, worldly society, religion ? Is that religion not less scrupulous, less generous, less just, less considerate for man than even my own ungodly, worldly, blinded nature ? No !

When I look for a religion, I must look for something above me, and not something beneath.' "

Uncle Tom had, and partially retains, a large audience in a section of the community whose importance many English, but few Western authors, have been disposed to underrate. Its most faithful friends have been children, among whom more eyes have grown moist over the death of "Eva" than over that of "Little Nell" herself. Americans have a remarkable aptitude for writing books for children. This arises partly from the fact that there are so many female authors, who have made them a special study; partly because there is something in the conditions of a young country, with a trying climate, that leads to their being regarded with peculiar care, humoured, and often to some extent even spoiled. Their chief poet, as we have seen, is constantly singing about them. Their best prose writer sends from Lenox and "The Wayside," two charming volumes, *The Wonder Book* and the *Tanglewood Tales*—giving the Greek, as Kingsley, in his *Heroes*, gives the Gothic, view of the old mythologies—into the nursery. There are no more attractive boys' books than Frederick Gerstaecker's numerous tales of adventure; especially *The Feathered Arrow*, *The Pirates of the Mississippi*, and *The Two Convicts*. Of other volumes, on the border-land between the domestic novel and the story-book, I am, on better authority than my own, instructed to recommend *The Lamplighter*, especially in the earlier portion, and *Mabel Vaughan*, by Maria E. Cummins; Louisa Alcott's *Little Women*, *Little Men*, *Good Wives*, *Under the Lilacs*, and *An Old Fashioned Girl*; Miss Cameron's *Thornton Hall*; Miss Prentiss's *Stepping Heavenward* and *Flower of the Family*; Maria Louisa Charlesworth's *Ministering Children*; *The Gates Ajar*, *Mercy Gliddon's Work*, *Gipsy Breynton*, *Hedged In*, and others, by Miss E. S. Phelps, who has also contributed to more mature romance; Miss Whitney's *Gayworthys* and *Faith*

Gartney's Girlhood; Marjory's Quest, by J. T. Gould; and *Helen's Babies*. Frequent favourites are Miss Wetherell's *Wide Wide World, Queechy*, and *Melbourne House;* the *Fern Leaves* and *Shadows and Sunbeams*, published under the sobriquet of Fanny Fern; with Jacob Abbott's *Caleb in the Country* and *Caleb in the Town*, comparable in some respects to Miss Edgeworth's *Frank*. Some of these, a handful out of a bushel, are apt to be occasionally too ostentatious in their sentiment and moralities; but the majority are graphic and interesting, sometimes freshly unconventional and picturesque.

I shall pass from the generation slightly older to that of our younger contemporaries, with some notice of a novelist, traveller, and soldier, hindered, by the short span of his innocently erratic life, from securing the place in his country's literature to which, in the estimate of those who knew him best, he was, by his genius and character, entitled to aspire. I give an outline of his career—as that of the last American with whose personality we venture to concern ourselves—condensed or quoted from the biographical cameo, prefixed to the edition of his works, by his friend W. G. Curtis.

THEODORE WINTHROP, direct descendant of the first Governor of Connecticut, and on the mother's side, of Jonathan Edwards, was born, 1828, in Newhaven. He studied at Yale, and after graduating there as a distinguished student, in 1848, he, for the sake of his health, through his life more or less invalided, set out on a course of European travel. "He went first to England, spending much time at Oxford, where he made many pleasant acquaintances, and walking through Scotland. He then crossed over to France and Germany, exploring Switzerland on foot, and pushed on to Italy and Greece." During his tour he met Mr. Aspinall of New York; on his return was engaged as tutor to the son, and afterwards employed in the counting-house of that gentleman. Becoming

restless, he, in the service of the Pacific Steam Company, visited Panama; then travelled through California and Oregon, and thence to Vancouver's Island and Hudson's Bay. Subsequently he joined the expedition of Lieutenant Strain, and, later, in 1856, that of Fremont. We next find him practising law at St. Louis, then at New York, where he "delighted to haunt the studio of his friend Church the painter, and watch day by day the progresss of his picture the 'Heart of the Andes,'" his elaborate and glowing account of which is perhaps the most careful and appreciative piece of art-criticism that had up to his time been written in America. During the interval between this date and the outbreak of the war he was engaged in writing tales and sketches, which did not attract the attention they deserved. In 1861 he enrolled in the Northern army, started for the South in April, and wrote from Washington a lively description of the camp. On the 10th of that month he was shot dead while cheering on the van of his men at Great Bethel.

"Winthrop," says Mr. Curtis, "was one of the men who represent the fine fibre of manhood that makes the worth of the race." "His wild campaigning was always a passion with him. His stories of travel were so graphic and warm that, on hearing one of them, my younger brother exclaimed, 'It's as good as Robinson Crusoe.'" "He had the heroic sincerity which belongs to modesty;" but "of a noble ambition and sensitive to applause . . . he felt that he had shown his credentials, and they were not accepted. 'I can wait, I can wait,' was the answer his life made to the impatience of his friends. . . . A plant may grow in a cellar; but it will flower only under the due sun. . . . Sir Philip Sidney was but a lovely possibility, until he went to be Governor of Flushing. What else was our friend until he went to the war."

The last sentence, in evident deprecation of the charge of partiality, points to the fact that Winthrop's wandering life was a hindrance to the concentration of his energies; even to the perfection of his style, which is always fresh and clear, but sometimes rugged and dashing. On the other hand, the adventurous activity of his nature is the source of much of

the charm of his work, which, like that of Sidney, to whom Mr. Curtis is fond of comparing him, was more than a mere promise. His claim to recognition lies not merely in his having been an actor as well as a dreamer, but in the fact that he has done substantial and peculiar, though imperfectly-appreciated, work. He belonged in part to the class of the older writers in whose minds incident predominated, but he was also an analyst of the school of Hawthorne, and might, with length of years, have been his most legitimate successor. The first phase is represented by his novel, *John Brent*, in great measure a graphic record of his experiences in the Far West, mingled with imaginative romance. The descriptive passages in this book, especially that of the chase, rivet our attention because they are brought into contact with scenes of emotion and passion, and are not mere transcripts of still life, such as we find on the gaudily-printed papers of old inn walls. *Edwin Brothertoft* is a tale of the Revolution war, which only misses being a classic by its frequent crudity of expression and ultra-ferocity of plot. The story begins with a glance backward at English History—

"The Cavaliers always ran when they saw Puritan Colonel Brothertoft and his troop of white horses coming. . . . Time passed. Kingly Oliver died. There was no Protector blood in gentle Richard Cromwell. He could not wield the land. 'Ho for Cavaliers! hey for Cavaliers!' In came the Merrie Monarch. Out Puritans and in Nell Gwynn! Out crop-ears and in lovelocks. . . . To prison, stout John Bunyan; to office, slight Sam Pepys. . . . To your blind study, John Milton. . . . To Whitehall, John Wilmot . . . Just at this moment, when all freedom was dead in England, Winthrop of Connecticut wrote to his friend at Brothertoft Manor, 'We have conquered the Province of New Netherlands. The land is goodlie, and there is a great brave river running through the midst of it. Sell thy manor, bring thy people . . . we need thee and the like of thee in our new communities. . . . Great Tom of Lincoln tolled farewell, and the beautiful tower of St. Botolph's at Boston saw the exiles out to sea. . . . Bluff is the bow and round as a pumpkin is the stern of the Dutch brig, swinging to its anchor in the bay of New York. It is the new arrival from England this sweet autumn day of 1665. . . . Welcome, chivalric gentlemen, to this raw country."

These sentences are eminently characteristic of the writer, if not of his ancestors. He proceeds to tell how the failure of the strife for liberty at home had taken all the fire of life out of the old Colonel, and that his descendants were "a mild decaying race, strong in all the charming qualities, feeble in all the robust ones." Edwin, the last male heir, is recalled from England, where he had been sent to study at Oxford, by the wreck of the family estates. He arrives to find the house in the hands of an upstart army contractor, and his father, who has let the estate slip through his fingers, on his deathbed: the latter, after obtaining his son's forgiveness, advises him to return to the Old Home. But the flame latent in the shadowy race, the force under gentleness, which is the theme of the book, here leaps up, as the hero turns towards Vandyck's portrait of his great ancestor,—"I love England, I love Oxford; the history, the romance, and the hope of England are all packed into that grand old casket of learning; but the Colonel embarked us on the Continent. He would frown if we gave up the great ship and took to the little pinnace again." Edwin, in an evil hour, meets with the contractor's daughter, a tulip-like full-blooded beauty, with a show of good-nature, who hates the name of Billop, and thinks she would look lovely in a wedding-dress. He falls into the snare of her physical charms, marries, and is miserable. The essence of vulgarity is linked to the essence of shrinking refinement, with the natural consequences. Slowly, we are told, though a few pages hurry us to the catastrophe, her love turns to hate; while his fades to pity. When the action of the drama—or rather melodrama—properly begins, the husband has abandoned his home, and, changing his name, enlisted as a private under Putnam. The wife, to whom the property belonged, is living in luxury and entertaining royalist officers, under circumstances set forth with sufficient directness. The *ménage* of the household, with the

kitchen dialogues of the negroes, Sappho and Plato, and the almost revolting description of the drunken feast, give occasion for the few humorous touches which here and there slightly relieve the tragedy. The crisis is precipitated by Brothertoft, under his mask of Orderly Lincoln, being informed that his wife, a traitress to her country as well as to himself, has betrothed their only daughter (whose mind she has poisoned against her father) to Major Kerr, a reprobate sprig of some English aristocratic family. The news is brought by the *major domo* Voltaire—a more lively specimen of the faithful negro than Uncle Tom—who succeeds in enlightening the girl's mind as to her mother's character, and persuading her to conspire in a plot for her own liberation. Kerr, being drugged, is easily surprised and pinioned as a prisoner of war, mainly by the instrumentality of Major Skerrett, the type of a young patriot. But, in the process, as Edwin Brothertoft is clambering through the window to assist in the capture, and protect his wife from injury in the scuffle, she herself, in whom a latent insanity has now developed, enters the room, with a pistol in her hand, fires at him, and, supposing she has killed him, spurns the prostrate body with her foot. She is seized and bound fast to a chair, to wait till the company has safely reached the American outposts. The conspirators are joined by Lucy, the willingly abducted daughter, and with Brothertoft, who has been only stunned by a touch of the ball on his forehead, they gallop off. With them also is an old retainer, Jierick Dewitt, who, having been betrayed by his wife—lady's-maid of the mistress of the house, and in a lower grade emulator of her vices—had got into drunken habits, and, finding his way to the cellar, had a last bout, leaving behind him a smouldering light. The party are many miles on their way, when he looks back, and peers into the dark. All that has gone before is required to enable us to appreciate the sensational horrors that follow,

with the grandeur of the devotion and courage of the long-inert Puritan Cavalier.

"'What is it?' said Brothertoft. 'Do you fear pursuit?' 'No,' whispered Jierick. This monosyllable sent a shiver to all their hearts. . . . 'I must see farther,' he resumed in the same curdling tone; and he sprang up the mound on the right. Edwin Brothertoft, impressed by this strange terror, followed. He was within a dozen feet of the summit . . . when Tierck leaped down and seized him tight by both shoulders. . . . Then, with his face close to the other's—'My God!' he hissed, 'I've set the house on fire. We've left that woman there tied to burn to death.' . . . A dull glow, like the light of moonrise through mist, was visible close to the dark line of the horizon. . . . An alarm gun from the frigate came booming through the silence. While they stood paralysed, Edwin Brothertoft sprang down from the mound, tore his daughter from the saddle, and was mounted himself quick as thought. 'I must save her!' he cried; 'your mother, my wife.' . . . A moment they could see the white horse, like a flash of light, as she flung down the break-neck hill side. Then she leaped into the mist, and a moment more they could hear her hoofs clattering.

. . . . . .

"'On, Volante! Straight for that light to the south! Fires move fast; we must go faster. Only three miles away, and there she sits bound—and the flames coming—she I once loved, God knows how faithfully! Gallop, gallop, Volante!

"'Bravely! here we are down the ridge! Now, stretch out over this smooth bit of clearing! Yes; that black line is a stone wall. Measure it, Volante! Not four feet! Good practice for our first leap! Easy now, steady! Hurrah! Over and a foot to spare! Well done, horse! And I have been a plodding foot-soldier! But I can ride still, like a boy, side-saddle or no saddle. A Brothertoft cannot lose the cavalier. We shall win.

"'What, Volante! Nothing to fear—that white strip in the dell! Only a brook. Barely twelve feet to leap. Never mind the dark and the bad start! Remember my wife—she burns, if we flinch. Now, together! Hurrah! Over, thank God! Splashed, but safe over and away!

"'A clearing again. Shame, Volante! Are you a ploughman's horse, that you labour so clumsily in these furrows? See that horrible glow upon the sky! This wood hides it again. Idle forest! why was it not burned clean from the ground a century ago? Everything baffles. No, Volante! no turning aside for this windrow? Over, over! Through, through, and now straight on! Yes; the hill is steep, but we must gallop down it. No stumbling. What! another wall, and higher? You shrink! No—you must. She shall not burn! Now, God help us! Down? No; up and off! Hurrah!

"'How we have rattled through those two miles! [And here is the road. Easier travelling, if you can only take that worm fence! The top bars are sure to be rotten. A fair start, my good mare, and do your best! Bravely again! I knew we should crash over. Plain sailing now! What, limping, flagging, Volante? Shame! This is a road fit for a lady's summer-evening canter. Shake out, Volante! Let me see your stride! Show your Lincolnshire blood! The winner of this race wins Life—LIFE, do you hear? Wake up there, you farmers! turn out and help! Fire at Brothertoft Manor. FIRE!

"'Faster, faster! Are we too late? Never! I see the glow brighter against the sky; but the night is still as death; fire will move slow. We shall see at the turn of the road. Faster now! She must not burn, sitting there, where I saw her by the dear fireside of the years gone by—sitting bound, and the flames snarling. Ah! I so loved her! I so trusted her! We were young. Life was so beautiful! God was so good! It was miserable that she should wound me, and more cruelly wound her own soul. But I have forgiven her. O, let me save her, if only to speak peace and pardon! She shall not burn. A dozen strides, and we can see the house. Perhaps this great light is the stables. No—everything! Fire everywhere. Too late! too late! Never! I can burn! She shall not!'

"And they galloped up the lawn."

There is another terrible scene of the bound mad woman, gradually alive to the sense of her doom, shrieking for help to the man whom she had, for years, longed to murder. Brothertoft appears on the edge of time, and at the risk of his life, but without serious injury, drags the scarred beauty, still alive and wearing her diamonds, from the wreaths of flame. He nurses her through all the Indian summer, and at the last—"She reached blindly for his hand. He took hers tenderly. And there by the solemn twilight they parted for a time. Death parted them. She awoke in eternity. He stayed to share a little longer in the dreamy work of life." Here the curtain really drops, though, in the afterpiece, there is a gleam of sunshine on the union of Lucy and Skerrett.

Cecil Dreeme, less startling in its episodes, which are yet of sufficient interest, is a novel of finer grain than *Brothertoft*. It is more mature and subdued in style, and more free from violences: mystery takes the place of horror: it is less like Brown's *Wieland* or *Wuthering Heights*, more akin to the

House of the Seven Gables or to Miss Brontë's *Villette.* The story is that of a noble-minded and sensitive girl, who, to escape a repulsive alliance has feigned suicide, and, escaping recognition, under an assumed name and male disguise hid herself in an attic, where, withdrawn from all society, half-buried from the world, she pursues her profession as an artist; drawing strange pictures symbolic of her history, and living all the while in constant dread of being detected by her persecutor. A fainting fit, brought on by exhaustion and anxiety, leads to the invasion of her sanctuary by the porter of the lodging, and another inmate, Robert Byng, the hero, who, after rescuing the supposed young man from death, contracts with him a close friendship. Various adventures, leading to the discovery that "Cecil Dreeme" is Clara Denman, result in their ultimate marriage. The plot is interesting, though improbable, the author being apt to bend the course of nature to the evolution of his ideas. The leading characters have all the merit of incisive individuality. We have—the old failing merchant, willing to sell the souls and bodies of his children to throw a veil over commercial malpractices, which it is one object of the book to expose; Emma Denman (Clara's sister), the motherless girl, consumed like a moth in the flame; Densdeth, one of the numerous re-issues of Mephistopheles, the "apostle of disenchantment, who revealed evil everywhere," because he everywhere caused it—a figure always impressive, though somewhat overdrawn; Towner, the terror-stricken slave, who, turning on his tyrant, becomes the Minister of Justice in the last act of his defeated life; and, as reliefs to these lurid forms, Cassandra Churm, the lonely man, hardening himself against a great sorrow by a lifelong asceticism, yet alert for the protection of innocence and the redress of wrong—"the ideal friend, staunch as oak, true as steel, warm as sunshine, eager as fresh air, tender as midsummer rain;" Robert Byng, romantic yet practical, but

over-plastic, "a fellow of good intentions," who dramatically adopts the natures of his companions as far as is consistent with the anchorage of honour; and Cecil, or Clara, herself, altogether womanly, in spite of her disguise, the unconscious model of her picture of "Cordelia."

> "How she flashed out of being all the false laws that check the mind's divine liberty! not the laws of refinement and high breeding: they, the elastic by-laws of the fundamental law of love, are an easy harness to the freest soul."

Apart from its startling situations, the book teems with passages of power, penetration, and pastoral beauty, *e.g.* the chapter called "Nocturne," with the description of night, "the day of the base, the guilty, and the desolate:" that headed "Lydian Measures," or the previous reference to the effect of a fragrance, a far-away sound, a weft of cloud, the leap of a sunbeam, or the carol of a bird in arresting from a treachery or a crime: nor is the book wanting in occasional traces of even broad humour, in such sentences as the following, which anticipates one aspect of the satire of *Democracy*:—

> "I cannot quite decide about taking clean shirts to Washington; in a clean shirt I might abash a Senator." "Abash without mercy! the country will thank you."

With all its defects of irregular construction, this novel is marked by a more distinct vein of original genius than any American work of fiction known to us that has appeared since the author's death. Winthrop's nature was essentially sad, though robust: his cynicism was healthy, because he believed in goodness: his strength, in its excess, may be charged, though rarely, with coarseness; but he is incapable of vulgarity. He has not the almost unerring taste of Hawthorne; his phrases are sometimes flippant, his occasional mannerisms not free from pedantry, but he is exceptionally genuine: his rare cheerfulness exhilarates, his

prevailing melancholy takes possession of the reader. His *Life in the Open Air* and minor sketches are inspired by the nature-worship of Thoreau, animated by a broader humanity. An American to the core, Winthrop has all the artistic fondness for Europe that pervades the *Marble Faun* of his predecessor: his memory lingers over the "fair spires and towers, and dreamy cloisters, dusky chapels, and rich old halls of beautiful Oxford." In Italy, he makes one of his friends expostulate—

> "Going back to America! to that matter-of-fact country, where every one reads the newspapers! to a country where hearts never break, and there can be no need of mercy, pity, or pardon, to life without shade, all bald, garish, steady sunshine."

Manliness and intensity are the leading characteristics of this "fresh, earnest, unflinching" spirit, who foreshadows in these words the close and crown of his brief and bright career:— "If the soul in the man has good hope and good courage, through all his tones, sound the song of hope and the pæan of assured victory." . . . "Whoever has lived knows that timely death is the great prize of life: who can regret when a worthy soul wins it?"[1]

In attempting to revive the memory of half-forgotten names, we can, at worst, be accused of exaggerated enthusiasm: in presuming to express our opinions of living writers we are exposed to the imputations of partiality, or prejudice, or patronage. The last is the only charge we need care to rebut, by acknowledging that "an ounce of wit is worth a pound of clergy," and that a page of creation outweighs a volume of comment. In this spirit we venture a brief estimate of three contemporaries, all accomplished interpreters of the life of their countrymen, but whose patriotism has, in each case, been modified by

[1] It is interesting to observe that the strong family talent and originality are also shown in the writing of Winthrop's sister, Mrs. Laura Johnson, especially in her records of travel, and *Poems of Twenty Years*.

extensive residence abroad. Their themes are partly national, partly European : they are all students of Teutonic thought and Romantic passion : their writings, mainly of the analytical school, deal with refinements of character evolved by strange conjunctures, rather than with the ordinary sequence, of events. They are followers of Nathaniel Hawthorne, in so far as they seem perplexed themselves, and determined to perplex us; one with mysteries, the other two with problems of society. A story is told of certain Red Indian chiefs who, appearing before the United States officials, on the day when they had been accustomed to receive a yearly present, and being greeted with an edifying lecture, exclaimed "We came to get tobacco, and to be made drunk, and you give us a sermon!" Similar, it has been observed, is the condition of mind of the unsophisticated reader who comes fresh from *Roderick Random* or *Rob Roy* or *The Red Rover*, to the study of *Garth* or *Roderick Hudson* or *The Undiscovered Country*. To dogmatise on the relative literary rank of men whose work is still in progress, were almost an impertinence. I am most attracted by the one who is most heavily handicapped. The highest form of noble birth, that of a great man's son, has its drawbacks. The jealous world can endure two statesmen, hardly two poets or romancers, of the same race. If a William Shakespeare in our days were to speak with the tongue of angels, it is doubtful if he would find an audience among men. It is boldness in JULIAN HAWTHORNE to write novels at all: the height of daring, to write them, as he habitually does, in the metaphysical manner: an almost incredible audacity, that he should take for his recurring text the ruining or regenerating results of sin, and illustrate his theories of transmitted qualities by reference to popular superstitions. The ghost of Napoleon I. was, at the commencement of the Franco-German war, represented, in political cartoons, as warning away from the gulf the wearer of his name. Julian Hawthorne

has only rashness in common with the prisoner of Sedan; but, in dealing with the supernatural, and endeavouring to make it throw light on moral problems, he should recall the line—

"Within that circle none dare walk but he."

It is as if a son of Spenser had attempted to complete the *Faëric Queene*, or a son of Bacon the *Novum Organum*. Nature, however, will have her way, and perhaps the only literary lesson now worth reading is not to tax her energies by vainly endeavouring to do too much.

Julian Hawthorne's works, as those of the majority of his compeers, consist of shorter sketches, representing situations or episodes; and of more elaborate, though, in his case, seldom highly-finished, romances—generally tragedies—of a whole life. In the preface to his best volume of the former he boldly justifies the frequent unreality of the atmosphere in which they are steeped. "What is called the human interest, in fiction, is doubtless more absorbing than any other—but the marvellous always possesses a fascination, and justly. . . . He who would mirror in his works the whole of man must need include the impossible along with the rest. . . . *Tom Jones*, *Adam Bede*, and *Vanity Fair* are earth without sky . . . the sky of Shakespeare and Dante, of Goethe and George Sand. A reader with a healthy sense of justice feels that an occasional excursion mysteryward is no more than he has a right to demand. And such excursions are wholesome for literature no less than for him. For the story-teller, sensible of the risk he runs of making his supernatural element appear crude and ridiculous, exerts himself to the utmost, and his style and method purify and wax artistic under the strain." This is precisely what Nathaniel Hawthorne has — what Julian has not—done. The latter has paid too little attention to his style, as a comparison of the above with any of his father's prefaces will show: it is rarely inaccurate, but often crude: his finest sentences seem constrained into

beauty or power by the terseness or truth of the thought; but he never exerts himself to avoid repetition: consequently few who have written so well have also written so ill. His only considerable humorous sketch, *Mrs. Gainsborough's Diamonds*, which he slights as "a mere *jeu d'esprit*," is, in matter and manner, rarely excellent, strange enough yet perfectly credible, satirical and dramatic—a little in the style of N. P. Willis, but on a higher level. In the same volume *The Laughing-Mill*—a ghastly misnomer—is as powerful as *Ethan Brand*, and the pathetic *Christmas Guest* is no way inferior to *Lily's Quest* or the *Sister Years* of the elder Hawthorne. But when Julian attempts to combine the manner of the last-named, of Edgar Poe and of G. P. R. James, as in the murderous *Kildharns Oak*, the result is ludicrous. The incidents of the duel with Red Beard; the planting of the tree; the man rolled down the cliff; the torn hand; the Sybil of ninety years blown away with the oak in a storm,—are less worthy of the *Castle of Otranto* than of a third-rate theatre. A more interesting example of this writer's tendency to trip, and fall on the wrong side of the line, is *Ellice Quentin;* a story in which occasional flashes of insight and touches of subtilty traverse and sometimes redeem the almost nonsensical basis. Ellice loves Geoffrey Herne, keeps him from going to Australia, and, "her eyes glowing with luxurious light, the curving of her lips being eloquent of refined enticement," says, "Be sure you make me love you enough. Do I overflow your heart?" Her father suddenly inherits a fortune. She meets Geoffrey, and wishes him to make her safe by an off-hand marriage. But he, being law-abiding and honourable, recoils. She replies, "Well, it is fate," and writes next day giving him up. Herne, after the fashion of disappointed men, gets on at the bar. Subsequently, he, at a garden party, meets Ellice, now the wife of Mr. Amidon, "a youngish-looking man, with a flaxen moustache and pale

grey eyes rather red round the edges," who opens his mouth, only once, to exclaim, "Capital punch, upon my soul." Mrs. Amidon tells Geoffrey that she cannot do without him, and only "wears her husband as she wears her hat." "She was a woman who wanted much; but who was not, perhaps, willing to go all lengths to get it. . . . A woman who has achieved a position before the world will hesitate profoundly before abandoning outward conventionality for avowed outlawry. Compromises are more convenient. But how if a stubborn man persists in refusing to stoop to compromise?" Geoffrey does so; but she gives him a "white rosebud," puts it in his button-hole, and says, "Before this fades." She drives to his hotel, sees him at the window reading a paper, and murmurs, "If he looks out and recognises me, I will go to him." He does not; so she returns to Mayfair in the same hansom. Two years pass: Herne is morosely neglecting his work. "What is the odds what a man does? The devil is at the bottom of it all." Meanwhile Ellice, having determined to divorce her husband, comes to her lover, having in vain written for him. "Your rose is withered," she cries, "but it may not be too late to make it bloom again." "We cannot," he answers; "I am going to be married." She asks to see the lady; and at last his virtue succumbs. "Oh, Ellice, if you only say so I will come without her." But she has a grain of conscience, and demurs, in her turn, to the suggested treachery. The betrothed pair pay a visit to the old love: she brings in three glasses of wine. Gertrude and Geoffrey choose safely: Ellice drains the one poisoned cup and dies, leaving the survivors in a somewhat unpleasant position. Such outlines are apt to be travesties; and, here as elsewhere, apology is due for omission of the delicate shades and lurid lights which impassion, if they do not vitalise, the story. But there is no defence of the melodramatic conclusion. In another tale, of about the

same length, the author's success is as decided as is his failure in the above, to make us believe in his stage and sympathise with his actors. The introduction to *Archibald Malmaison* contains a few sentences of characteristic pessimism, at least as true as the glib optimism which it challenges—

> "When I was a child I used to hope my faery stories were true. . . . The knowledge of maturity, which has discovered that nothing that is true (in the sense of being existent) can be beautiful, deprecates truth beyond everything. What happens, we find, is never what ought to happen, nor does it happen in the right way or season. In palliation of this hardship, the sublime irony of fate grants us our imagination. . . . Your hearer's life and those of his friends are enough true stories for him; what he wants of you is merciful fiction. . . . To bully him with facts is like asking him to live his life over again; and the civilised being is yet to be found who would not rather die than do that. . . . I have now to reconcile this profession of faith with the incongruous fact that the following story is a true one."

The exceptional character of the facts, in the history of the Malmaisons—whom he represents as an old Sussex family of the Huguenots—may have reconciled Mr. Hawthorne to their reality. Archibald, the hero, born in 1800, and dying in 1833, is represented as passing, in the interval, through successive periods of mental nights and days, each of seven years' duration; alternately asleep and awake; almost an idiot, or with the mere faculties of an infant, and then suddenly appearing as a man of quick intelligence and large sympathies, before whose domineering will the other characters collapse or wane. In the last act, he kills his mortal enemy (who has married Archibald's mistress, while his rival was comatose) in a duel, flings the body into a lake, and establishes himself, with his liberated bride, in a secret chamber of the great mansion, to which he alone has the secret key. He leaves her and returns, as he thinks, in an hour; but the destined years of sleep have passed over him, during which she has been immured; and he finds her dress covering a skeleton, like that in the chest of the

Mistletoe Bough. The opportunities afforded by this tragedy are put to a masterly use in a tale of terror, love, violence, and mystery where, granting the postulate of the strange pathology, there is nothing incredible. The manner in which, in critical moments, Malmaison bounds back into life and authority frequently reminds us of the old nobleman's reappearance in the burning castle of Victor Hugo's *Quatrevingt-Treize.*

The same artistic and other features—sombre views, penetrative power, and limited range of vision, a large demand on our credulity, great inequality of style, a passion for the anomalous, with general disdain for the conventionalities of life—appear in the author's longer works. Of these, *Sebastian Strome* has the best-constructed plot and most freshness, if not originality, in its characters. The good Vicar himself is a model type of unaggressive Stoicism, the "incarnation," as he is described, "of self-forgetting enthusiasm," keeping "through all the stress and strain of manhood the guileless candour and ingenuousness of a child," the sternness of his devotion constantly softened by a charity that endures all things but treachery; a man of whom we hardly need to be told that "confidence went to him as metal to the loadstone." Talking of the poor girl, his parishioner, who has been led astray, he "seems holding out protecting arms to her through the crowd," but when she will not give her betrayer's name he exclaims, "I'm glad I do not know him, wife. I could not keep my hands from taking him by the throat; the man's heart must be flint." "Surely," rejoins the silver-haired old lady, "her sin is as great." But the husband is of another mind, and, resolving to go to London in search of Fanny, says, with fine tact, "It is a man's work to bring her here, not yours." The task is ultimately devolved upon their son and idol, Sebastian, who is in the metropolis studying for the ministry, and is engaged to a noble, though impulsive, country

heiress, his old playmate. He is a gambler, an atheist, and, as the novel-initiated reader from the first divines, the criminal. His moral redemption, the central theme of the book, is wrought out through a series of vicissitudes and calamities, probable and improbable ; the main agents being the remorse caused by the death of his father (who is killed by the revelation of his son's guilt) and love for his child, with whom he lives for some years, as a wood-carver, in the slums of London. This child is run over by the real villain of the story, a wretched Jew fortune-hunter, incongruously made to obtain the hand of the heiress, who is a sturdier specimen of the type represented by Ellice Quentin. Of the other characters the best is Smillet the street-preacher, brave soldier, and ideal confidant: his cry of grief on hearing his friend's confession is one of those strokes of real power which redeem irregularities. "Oh, Sebastian, I'd rather have done it myself." A like touch is Mary Dene's remark, after resisting her old lover's temptation. "It was the devil prompted us; for I felt it too; else I should not have spoken so angrily." Or this, "We cannot find Eternity so long as Time: it only means we shall be more alive." The author, under difficulties, succeeds in making us ultimately forgive the younger Strome. He fails to reconcile us to *Bressant*—the hero of an earlier novel, woven on thinner strands—for the inherent selfishness of this social innovator and trifler with hearts, over which he wields a fickle lordship, by the sheer audacity of a handsome giant, is unredeemed by any final sacrifice. Valeyon is a weaker forecast of the vicar, hardly made more interesting by the mystery that surrounds him. Here, as elsewhere, in the two women, Cornelia and Sophia, we have the hereditary contrasted female types: the text of the *Marble Faun* is set forth too plainly in the dialogue. "B.—'To do anything there must be a whirl in the blood. . . . It would be better to

commit a deadly crime than to dribble out like that fountain.' S.—'Even to speak of sins doing good is a fearful and wicked thing.' B.—'I think anything is better than to be torpid.'"

The excessive intricacy of *Garth* makes special criticism, in our space, impossible. It is the author's only considerable romance, the scene of which is laid in America, and it gives occasion for his most vivid descriptions,—as the passage of the torrent, or the race on skates at the rescue,—and it has some historical interest. The story in this case turns on transmitted qualities,—the hero having inherited a disposition to commit murder, against which he successfully struggles,—and on a blood-feud, not, as in the *House of the Seven Gables*, between families, but between races; the one represented by the half-caste Indian Kineo, the other by Garth, who is a Puritan Anak with the soul of a *Sintram*. The opposed female types reappear, in their weirdest and wildest forms, in Madge Denver and Elinor. The *dénoûment* is both terrible and perplexing; but, in isolated incidents, the author has never been so dramatic. Julian Hawthorne's[1] depth of insight, passion unchilled by philosophy, determination to cleave through the crusts of society to the lava reservoirs of the heart, observing and reflective powers undimmed by the storms and gusts of feeling he represents and seems to share, catholic breadth with profound purpose,—these qualities indisputably stamp him as a man of genius; but his talents are inadequate, his work frequently chaotic, often recklessly sensational, and he is perpetually playing variations of the same tune on the same old Stradivarius. No one requires to be more continent of speech; or, if he desires them to live, more careful in his

[1] In his recent very successful sensation stories, *Prince Saroni's Wife* and the *Countess Felicita's Discovery*, he rivals Mr. Wilkie Collins on his own ground: but, without concurring in the frequent depreciation of an often charming writer and large hearted moralist, we doubt if this is the manner of writing in which Mr. Hawthorne can do most justice to his higher powers.

creations. He has hitherto, in his conceptions and plots, followed too closely the example set by the glory of his name: he is in danger of forgetting to follow it in one essential. There is little that may not be hoped from him, if he be content to disdain the bad precedents of contemporary light literature, and write one novel in two years: there is nothing that may not be feared if, bitten by the tarantula activity, against which Nathaniel Hawthorne unceasingly protested, he persevere in the foolish feat of issuing two in one year.

Before considering the other two leading novelists to whom I have referred, we may commend the *Still Water Tragedy* of the accomplished poet, Mr. T. BAILEY ALDRICH, as combining a sensational interest with vivid realism. In this, one of the ablest of recent Trades' Union novels, the often artistic method of beginning with the crisis and afterwards reverting to the events leading up to it, is employed with startling effect. Lemuel Stackford, an old curmudgeon, has been mysteriously murdered: the head policeman, after long tracking the scent, asserts that he has "found the man" in the nephew of the victim, who has been grossly insulted by his uncle on communicating his intention of marrying Margaret Slocum, the daughter of his employer. The chain of damnatory evidence, which by aid of a forged letter and stolen key seems complete, is finally snapped by the painting on a barrel and the broken ejaculations, on his deathbed, of the real assassin's accomplice; but, till near the close, we are kept in suspense as to the hero's safety if not his guilt. The main merit of the book lies in its graphic details, the love scenes in the designer's studio, and the troubles with "the hands" in the marblework. The ringleaders of the strike—Torrini the Italian, the drunken Peters, and Durgan the villain—are strong and lifelike sketches, as is Richard Stackford himself; but the finest trait in the story is Margaret's implicit faith. "'Did he tell you of his

going to call on his uncle?' asks her father, whose belief in the man who has fought his battle and saved his business is tottering; 'No, but he kissed me;' from which she concludes that he left her with no murderous intent." In some of its aspects the *Still Water Tragedy* resembles Mr. Reade's *Put yourself in his Place;* in others, the still finer Lancashire tale, *That Lass o' Lowrie's*, the authoress of which, Mrs. F. H. BURNETT, has since, as a naturalised American, made important contributions to the literature of her adopted country. Few more beautiful pictures of simplicity allured for a time by the glitter of admiring fashion, and vehemently returning to its old allegiance, have been drawn than her *Louisiana*. To her *Fair Barbarian* we shall return.

Julian Hawthorne's two leading, and in some respects, more successful, rivals, have met with swift and adequate recognition. They are seldom censured, sometimes overpraised. Together they stand in peril of betraying their mission by overworking their mines. So much has been said, and is being said of them, in reviews, that little is left to add. The just popularity of Mr. HENRY JAMES is due in great measure to the deftness of his workmanship, the skilful manner in which he interweaves his quick and keen impressions of America, England, Italy, and France; and to the fact that he is in essential sympathy with the better average of the world. His style, defaced at starting by pedantry, has, in his later work, become more precise and clear. In his pages light and shade are pleasantly interlaced: his satire is sometimes sharp but never savage; his morality always reliable, *i.e.* orthodox without being obtrusively conventional; for he brings his actors under the influence of temptation, while we feel assured they will always make their escape from it. Without vanity, he seems on good terms with himself; and makes friends by a genial seriousness. He is frequently commonplace, tiresomely dif-

fuse in dealing with trifles, or reporting imaginary gossip; but he is seldom absurd. Mr. James has somewhat the same relation to Nathaniel Hawthorne that Mr. Anthony Trollope has to Thackeray. His works are not those of a recluse, who has lived in remote corners, and heard strange people, in and about them, discourse of strange matters. They are the sometimes brilliant essays of a versatile man of affairs; a favourite, we should imagine, of the society of which, at home and abroad, he has taken shrewd, but seldom cynical, notes. His numerous novels and sketches, though apparently thrown off with an almost fatal facility, are infected by excess of analysis. He applies the same chemistry to minor eccentricities that his predecessors in his own country, and—perhaps his more frequent models—Balzac and Turgénieff in Europe, have applied to the deeper and graver anomalies of character. Of his longer and more celebrated works, *The Europeans* exhibits this and other defects in their most pronounced form. The principal character, the Baroness Eugenia Münster,—the run-away Morganatic wife of Prince Silberstadt Schreckenstein,—is a disagreeable fortune-huntress, who ought to have got into more trouble. Her brother, Felix (who, with his sister, quarters himself on his cousins, in the coolest way), is a very feeble Clifford Pyncheon, or Tito Melema; Wentworth, a stupid and stiff New Englander; Brand, an uninteresting curate; and Robert Acton insufficiently real. Charlotte and Gertrude are shadowy; and the whole story, despite its graphic opening, is improbable, with the unredeemed improbability of common life. Some of the most characteristic examples of what we have ventured to call the writer's pedantry, are found in this book.

"The sudden irruption into the well-ordered consciousness of the Wentworths, of an element not allowed for in its scheme of usual obligations, required a readjustment of that sense of responsibility which constituted its principal furniture.

"Gertrude, however, had to struggle with a great accumulation of

obstructions, both of the subjective, as the metaphysicians say, and of the objective, order; and indeed it is no small part of the purpose of this little history to set forth her struggle.

"They were all proud of him, in so far as the charge of being proud may be brought against people who were habitually, distinctly guiltless of the misdemeanour known as taking credit. . . . But a sort of frigidly-tender faith in his unlimited goodness was a part of their personal sense of right.

"It might have been said of him in advance, that he was too good a Bostonian to regard in the light of an eccentricity the desire of even the remotest alien to visit the New England metropolis.

"Acton was in fact very judicious—and something more besides; and indeed it must be claimed for Mr. Wentworth that in the more illicit parts of his preference there hovered the vague adumbration of a belief that his cousin's final merit was a certain capacity for whistling rather gallantly at the sanctions of mere judgment—for showing a larger courage, a finer quality of pluck, than common occasion demanded."

In justification, it may be, of this sort of thing, of which we have far too much, Mr. James has elsewhere written—"The good American will now be a more critical person than his complacent and confident grandfather. He has eaten of the tree of knowledge, and will not be a sceptic or a cynic, but an observer." I am not aware that the amount of truth in this remark applies more to America than to England; where we are in yearly danger of being criticised to death, and associated into nothingness. But, in an age of feverish introspection of ourselves, and obtrusive inspection of others—which Carlyle, in his *Characteristics*, long ago described as an invalid habit of feeling our own mental and moral pulses—there is nothing which the critic is more called upon to protest against than the excess of criticism. That the artist must be an observer is a truism; but he should be satisfied to record or indicate the results of his dissecting or chemical processes. It is a received rule that, in a good novel, the beauty of the heroine should not be analysed, but made to show itself in its effects. The same rule should be applied to character. Shakespeare never tells us that Othello was a jealous, or Goethe that Faust was a selfish, man. Even

our greatest recent novelist is apt to violate this rule: in reading *Middlemarch* or *Daniel Deronda* we feel afraid of being used as frogs on the anatomical table of some man or woman of genius. In turning from these and similar, though generally inferior, "demonstrations" of our nerves, arteries, and glands, we feel inclined to open the windows looking to the east, and exclaim with Emerson, "Cannot we be patient, and let the morning be?"

The American, a pendant to *The Europeans*, is a decided advance in art, interest, and verisimilitude. The style is more sustained, the characters warmer, and the whole book on a higher level. Newman, who seems to have heard that "good Americans go to Paris when they die," is an original conception, a man of genuine worth, force, and feeling, with a crust of vulgarism, not vulgarity—painfully unsuccessful in endeavouring to forestall his paradise by alliance with an old French family. At the close we are very sorry for him, but do not wonder. Madame de Centre, on the other hand, promises more than she performs. M. de Bellegarde is the familiar aristocratic villain, M. Nioche a type of the old social *diplomate*, and Valentine of the best class of gentlemanly Parisian. The details, as in all relating to the adventuress,—the fascinating painter who cannot paint, and palms off her rubbish to Newman at her own price,—are excellent; but the family crime has all the vagueness without the glamour of the more unsubstantial mysteries of Edgar Poe.

Roderick Hudson, the most powerful of Mr. James's elaborate works, is more passionate, though less probable. Rowland Mallet, the superlatively virtuous "Dobbin," is secretly devoted to Mary Garland—a Puritan lay figure, till the close, when she shrieks aloud over the dead body of the thoroughly bad fellow to whom she is heartbound. Roderick himself, apparently meant to enlist our half-sympathies, is brought on the stage speaking slightingly of his mother—a Transatlantic

Mrs. Nickleby, living in constant regret of her elder son (who "would have made 50,000 dollars"), and distrust of artists.

"She had the advantage of me," says the self-ranked genius, to a gossip at Rome, "because she formerly knew a portrait-painter at Richmond, who did her miniature in black lace mittens (you may see it on the parlour table), who used to drink raw brandy and beat his wife. I freely forgive him his attempts to unscrew my headpiece and set it on another way."

Roderick deserts his betrothed for the Circe, Christina Light; and, when the latter becomes the Princess Casamassina, returns, for his own convenience, to the former. His Walt-Whitman-like bluster about his art is well contrasted with the cynic self-satisfaction of the clever French sculptor Gloriani, and the steady conscientious work of the simple-minded landscape-painter Singleton—"I mean to do the Morning; I mean to do the Night; I mean to do the Ocean, and the Mountains, and the Moon. I mean to make a magnificent statue of America." But the vapours of his vaulting ambition are unsustained by any purpose and unennobled by any aim above the glorification of the aspirant. He makes a poor statue of Adam, draws the head of the mother at whom he sneered, chisels a bust of Christina Light, and, shortly after, ends by tumbling over a precipice of the Alps, in a storm like that in which Kingsley's "Elsley Vavasour," his English prototype, caught his death on Cader-Idris. The last scene is the effective close of a stirring tragedy. The idea of aspiration transcending the possibilities of performance is handled with more delicacy of thought, if less variety of action, in the touching fragment entitled *The Madonna of the Future.* The insanity of a mentally-overstrained enthusiast is here represented as spending years over a canvas, destined to eclipse that which the world of art flocks to adore at Dresden: it is a mere mass of incoherent daubs. This is perhaps the truest, as it is certainly the saddest, of the author's minor pieces. In *Daisy Miller*—a

popular favourite—there are some subtle touches, but the central figure is exaggerated, if not incongruous. In the same volume, the *International Episode* is Mr. James's most incisive and humorous social sketch. The frank chattering hospitality of Mrs. Westgate on the one shore of the sea, and the well-bred insolence of Lord Lambeth's female relatives and protectors on the other, are admirably contrasted. The story is true and yet wonderfully fresh. Of the other minor pieces, we can only refer to the domestic narrative of *Washington Square;* the softened puritanism of *Madame de Mauves;* and the *Pension Beaurepas*—a sketch of foreign life, in that curious kind of community, which only loses a little by comparison with the pension made perpetual in the pages of the French Lear, *Père Goriot.*

Mr. James never pierces to the same deeps as Julian Hawthorne; but he walks over the surface with a far securer tread. His novels are like excellent *vers de société*, contrasted with imitations of Browning or of Blake. His work leaves us with the impression of vast versatility, sharp sight, perfect propriety, and an indefinite cleverness, often aiming, like the artists of his own frequent satire, at something higher than it generally hits.

A late reviewer of a group of American novels, confessedly knowing nothing of the society they delineate, save what he has "tasted in these sweetmeats with a bitter taste behind," yet finds "no reason to doubt the substantial truth of the unalluring picture." Untravelled critics are apt to forget that the United States embrace the greater part of the population of a continent, and consequently present indefinite varieties of character. It happens, however, that many Western novelists, in their useful *rôle* of national censors, are prone to dwell on the less attractive types. With a few exceptions, Mr. James's men are honest and persevering, but somewhat rough, millionaires; or Bostonians in pursuit of a reputation

for refinement; or they are forlorn enthusiasts, or abject lovers. His volumes, in one point of view, resemble tracts issued by an Emancipation Congress. A recent humorist gives notice of a projected "Society for the Prevention of Cruelty *from* Children;" the romance reader instinctively adds, "and Women." The maids and matrons who flash through the pages of Mr. James and Mr. Howells have fascinating features; with really wicked people those exemplary writers have little to do; but we would, in either equinox, cross the Atlantic to escape from some of their heroines. Delicately photographed, and evidently held up for our admiration, they are, though often as seductive, generally as scornful as the Jungfrau. Clever to the core, "with brains all over them," self-possessed and irreproachable, they are represented as, in their own country, inspired with the conviction, and guided by the rule, that men must work and women must spend. Personages, "with orbits and systems of their own," they have a mission of enjoyment and vanity, to whose free scope fathers, brothers, or husbands are, unfortunately, indispensable incumbrances. It seems quite natural for one of them to exclaim, "In America the gentlemen obey the ladies." As a rule, they exact from their cavaliers a deference as submissive as it is unrequited, and delight in the grovelling adulation which never dares to rebel with—

> "If she be not fair to me,
> What care I how fair she be?"

They go abroad, like fowlers, to bring down birds for their pastime, encouraging and receiving addresses, especially from English peers, for the purpose of disdaining and rejecting them. Their temperaments of ice are impregnable shields; passionless or "fancy free" in the vortex of flirtations, like games of cards with one-sided stakes, they are absolutely safe; and beginning by regarding marriage as an infringement of their liberties, they generally end by making shrewd

matches.[1] Their wits are keen, their repartees crushing, their beauty resistless; but their accomplishments are superficial, their self-conceit profound. From San Francisco to Finland they run about the world, without a touch of *mauvaise honte*, in every circle at their ease, flaunting the flag of the American girl, conquering and to conquer. This female type is almost a creation of the last twenty years. She has no equivalent in the pages either of Irving or Cooper, or Hawthorne or Longfellow, and is as far removed from "Zenobia" as from "Evangeline." Is she a new fact or a new ideal? She is, at all events, least agreeable when most overlaid with intellectual lacquering, and most conciliatory when most nearly approaching the savage state. Mrs. Burnett's *Fair Barbarian* is an imperious young creature, "not used to obeying people,"—the spoilt daughter of a Western speculator, and an actress,—paying to a starched English county town a visit of triumph and merriment. She crosses the sea as if it had been a mill-pond; swoops down, with her six huge trunks, on her terrified old aunt, like an armed man; and immediately begins talking of her father with irreverent affection: "He's awfully rich sometimes; and then again he isn't. Shares go up and then go down, and you don't seem to have anything;" but "people will always lend Pa money, and then he's lucky with it." So she wears a fortune in real diamonds and lace in the forenoons; gives generous donations to the curate, teaches him to play croquet; and mercilessly "chaffs" Lady Theobald, the awful person who directs Belinda, rules Slowbridge, and thinks that the conduct of American girls towards men is "of a character to chill one's

[1] "Isabel," in Mr. James's recent *Portrait of a Lady*—a tiresome book—is one of the most salient representatives of the type we are describing; but, after scorning the love of the one really fine character, Roger Touchett, and formally rejecting that of two amiable devotees (including the customary lord), she is exceptionally unfortunate in her final choice. It is, however, a testimony to Mr. James's realism that he makes us entertain towards her, as to other mere creations of his brain, *e.g.* Henrietta Stackpole, a strong personal dislike.

blood." Octavia Bassett flirts with Mr. Barold,—her influential and respected admirer,—gets him to call for and of course to propose to her, being all the while pre-engaged to honest Jack, who worked in her father's mines in Nevada; but she is so unaffected and half-civilised that we rather smile than frown at the eccentricities of this child of nature. Nevertheless, after three volumes of the company of the best of those unsentimental and progressive patterns, we turn, with relief, to Chaucer's "Constance," or Shakespeare's "Cordelia," Wordsworth's "Lucy," Schiller's "Amalia," or Goethe's "Clärchen," or the consoling "Dove" of Mr. Black's *In Silk Attire*, or to the romance and passion which, under the mere show of levity, lifts above any of these Western types the glowing maidenhood of the last-named writer's masterpiece, the inimitable *Madcap Violet*.

Mr. W. D. HOWELLS, a thinker, prose artist, and traveller at home and abroad, has made good use of his experiences on both sides of the Atlantic. Of the sea itself we have, since Cooper, nothing so vivid as the *Lady of the Aroostook*. The life on board ship is relieved from dulness by the fresh graces of the heroine—a highly-civilised "Ayacanora" bound Eastward Ho!—self-possessed in the confidence of her purity; and by the occasional touches of humour, culminating in the half-serious, half-comic accident to Mr. Hicks. The author's recollections of the St. Lawrence are preserved in the sketch-book of the *Wedding Tour;* and in the *Chance Acquaintance*. The scenery in this striking, and, in some respects, original idyll of the North-West, is brought before us with a picturesque touch, resembling that of George Fleming, the gifted author or authoress of *A Nile Novel*.[1] The sail up the Saguenay,

[1] It would require the experience of Egyptian travel to do justice to the delicate or sombre lights and shades of temple, pyramid, and lotus river in which this fine love-story is set.

especially the episode of Arbuton's hitting with his pebble the great beetling cliff, is pre-eminently graphic; and the pictures in and around Quebec,—of the quaint old town, with its broad prospect, narrow streets, and history-haunted environs, of the lichen-clad Chateau Bigot,—add, by their effective setting, to the interest of the brief romance. The story, in which the democratic, if not communistic, sympathies of the author are most apparent, is that of the premature engagement of an unsophisticated girl to a New England exquisite, happily prevented from resulting in an ill-assorted marriage by the timely betrayal of his inability or unwillingness to accept its consequences. Arbuton, "always making himself agreeable under protest," with "his cold, snubbing, putting-down ways," the "young iceberg," who is surprised into melting by the girl's beauty and grace, is one of the most consummate models of a highly-respectable and conscientious "prig" in modern fiction. He is both good and brave; but so unintentionally and habitually offensive that, after passing a week in his company, we should long for an hour with "Bill Sykes" or "Mr. Rochester." Kitty is bright and true, and by no means foolish in her frankness, but more slightly drawn. Fanny Ellison, a match-maker, who "would discover the tender passion in the eyes of a potato," but is by no means satisfied with her happily frustrated achievement, and her husband, the Colonel, wearing lightly his laurels from the Civil war, are true to nature but somewhat sketchy; while Uncle Jack stands in the background, among the oil wells of Erie Creek, like a warning shadow. The fine ladies from Boston, in whose presence Mr. Arbuton is ashamed of his rural *fiancée*, forcibly embody the insolence of provincial fashion. Nothing in the volume is more natural than the disenchanting effect of poor Kitty's honestly assumed country dress. Unconventionally, at the close the heroine is not paired off with some other fool, but is left with her future

unexplored—a commendable variation to the jaded reader of modern novels. Mr. Howell's consular experiences, partially reproduced in his *Venetian Life*, are idealised in the *Foregone Conclusion*, a subtle and almost oppressively sad repetition of the recurring theme of aspiration mocked by reality. Don Ippolito's inventions, and his hopeless passion, take the place of the mad painter's Madonna. But amid much lively conversation, incident and caricature (as the portrait of Mrs. Vervain), the image of the forlorn sceptical monk and broken-down visionary alone keeps a place in our affection. Ferris is energetic and kindly, with a caustic tongue and good sense; but if his remarks at the tomb of his old rival mean, as he says, no harm, they exhibit little heart. His wife is softer, but equally practical. The shadows of the palace and the prison, on either side of the Bridge of Sighs, seem to darken the book. In *Dr. Breen's Practice*, on the other hand, we have the fresh breezes of New England. It is a pleasant tale of the adventures of a female doctor, happily free from the hardness of most American heroines, who, honestly struggling in her profession, is disgusted by the apathy of her own sex; and, in the end, is emancipated from her toils in a manner, frequent, as would appear, in those latitudes; for, in common with other girls in recent romances, after rejecting her lover, she ends by proposing to him, and is accepted. The story abounds in startling situations—as the dangers in the boat, etc.—in satirical or trenchant, though not always consistent, remarks, *e.g.*—

"It's tremendous to think what men could accomplish for their sex, if they only hung together as women do." "Duty! I'm sick of duty! Let the other women who are trying to do something for themselves take care of themselves as men would. I don't owe them more than a man would owe other men, and I won't be hoodwinked into thinking I do." "There is such a thing as having too much conscience, and of being stupified by it, so that you can't really see what is right." "Optimistic fatalism is the real religion of our orientalising West." "Mullridge's grandfather passed

ing days in robust inebriety, and lived to cast a dying vote for General Jackson."

The sharpest antagonism of the book is against the Anti-homœopathic intolerance of the medical craft. On woman's rights it gives an uncertain sound.

Mr. Howells is, like Mr. James, essentially a realist, with an excessive love, almost a craze, for analysis; but he has achieved his greatest success where he has ventured to tread on the edge of the two worlds of common life and mystery. *The Undiscovered Country* is not merely his masterpiece:[1] it is altogether deeper than his other work. The physical facts of Mesmerism have received more attention in America than in England; and the more supernatural claims of Clairvoyance obtain wider acceptance, even among men of knowledge and culture, not because Americans are more credulous than Englishmen, but because abnormal psychical phenomena are more frequent in their atmosphere, and, in graver matters, they are less restrained by fashion. Nowhere has the master-motive of so-called "Spiritualism" been so boldly set forth as in this strange tale. The leading character, more dupe than quack, imagines that he has found in its "manifestations" the one solid proof of a future state of existence; clings to this—as thousands of his countrymen at this moment really do—as the sole voucher of an immortality made inestimable by bereavement; and conceives himself entrusted with a mission to convert and comfort the world, otherwise lapsing into materialism. Dr. Boynton, from his first appearance, at the *séance* of the callous juggler, Mrs. Le Roy, to his heartrending failure, is consistently pathetic, but too readily acquiesces in the final disenchantment. This romance, which beats with such power at the iron gates of the unseen world, is excellent in scenery as in portraiture. The whole episode of the Shakers is well sus-

[1] I write in ignorance of *A Modern Instance*, which has just appeared.

tained. The refuge of the forlorn itinerants with that quaint community reminds us of Una's dwelling with the "simple savage folk." Ford is a shrewdly-drawn picture of a cynic, endowed with some intellectual brilliancy and depth of feeling: there is a touch of conventionality (redeemed by the half-humorous difficulties with the Shakers) in his marriage with Egeria. She is one of the fragile creatures whom we are charmed to find, still, of possible growth in the New England of Bostonia Victrix. But she is as like Priscilla as her father is unlike Westervelt.

The successors of Nathaniel Hawthorne are, consciously or unconsciously, living in his shade. In passing from the one to the other, we "wander down into a lower world," and find ourselves repeating, "The words of Mercury are harsh after the songs of Apollo." We return from the pupils to the master, as from the schools of Raphael to himself, or from Ben Jonson to Shakespeare.

CHAPTER XII.

AMERICAN HUMORISTS—CONCLUSION.

It has been said that man is the only animal that laughs or weeps; for he alone is struck with the difference between what things are and what they ought to be. Human life is presented under two phases:—the serious, in which the mind contemplates events in a regular order; and the ludicrous, where this order is broken and the mind is subjected to a pleasant start. The former phase receives its literary adornment or interpretation from Fancy and Imagination: the latter from Wit and Humour. The two pairs are similarly related, and in both cases the dividing line between them is imperfectly ascertained. "Wit," says Isaac Barrow, in a passage, much of which may be applied to humour, "is a thing so versatile and multiform that it seemeth no less hard to settle a clear notice thereof than to make a portrait of Proteus, or to define the figure of fleeting air. Sometimes it lieth in allusion to a known story or saying, sometimes in forging an apposite tale. . . . It is lodged in a sly question or a smart answer, in a tart irony or hyperbole, in a plausable reconciling of contradictions, or in acute nonsense, in a counterfeit speech or mimic gesture." The distinction between the terms is partially indicated by their etymologies: the one pointing to intellectual insight and rapidity, the other to a constitutional peculiarity, based on a state of feeling

rather than knowing; yet we have the apparently contradictory phrase, "dry humour," indicating the difficulty in marking their boundaries. Speaking roughly, we may say that Wit consists in striking together two words or notions, like flint and steel; while Humour lies mainly in sympathy with some quaint feature or the illustration of some incongruity of life. The former results in a spark or flash, the latter in a glow of light and heat. The former prevails in satire, in the mock epic of Voltaire, and in such plays as those of our Restoration dramatists: the latter in the higher comedy of Shakespeare or Molière. The lowest form of Wit is the pun. On a somewhat higher level we have the surprise, *e.g.*—

> "Beneath this stone my wife doth lie;
> She's now at rest—and so am I;"

or, to take a more savage example, Swift's account of the infamous minister of the ruling Yahoo, closing with the matter-of-fact assurance, "He generally remains in office till a worse can be found." A full half of American humour, so-called, is of this type. Yet more subtle is the retort, or the epigram, of which Pope is the English master, *e.g.*—

> "Now, night descending, the proud scene was o'er;
> But liv'd, in Settle's numbers, one day more,"

where some thought is required to appreciate the point; as constantly in Heine, *e.g.*—"The three great enemies of Napoleon have all ended miserably: Castlereagh cut his throat, Louis XVIII. rotted upon his throne, and Professor Saalfield—is still a Professor at Göttingen." Wit in Shakespeare almost always runs along with Fancy, as in Mercutio; or with Humour, as in all that relates to Falstaff. Humour is a word of many meanings. It begins on the low level of any laughter-provoking absurdity, and rises, as in the Fool in *Lear*, to a tragic height. To children and uneducated persons everything strange seems incongruous; and as most things

beyond their threshold are strange to them, they are continually being amused when they travel. Adults, so shrewd that we can hardly suspect them of a hearty laugh, travesty this mood, as they travesty all that is really touching in life and history, and call themselves "Innocents Abroad." But the real child, who begins by being afraid of a false face, a dwarf, or a giant, a little later grins at them; and Hazlitt tells us that "three chimney-sweepers meeting three Chinese in Lincoln's Inn Fields, they laughed at one another till they were ready to drop down." With the increase of knowledge and sorrow, the latent differences of nature are developed: the severe man becomes grim; the shallow takes delight in the flippancies of burlesque and parody; the cynic jeers alike at humbug and hypocrisy, patriotism and benevolence; the genial man finds matter for smiles in sorrow and for tears in joy, while following and sharing either fortune of his friend. Wit and Humour, the one more the growth of nature, the other of art, are Fancy and Imagination inverted; as when we look through the large end of a telescope and see everything small. They manifest themselves variously in nations as well as individuals. Humour, in the Greek classics, shows itself mainly in the guise of a lambent irony, at the expense of the speaker or his neighbours; in the English, as a subtle appreciation of the curiosities of character. In Sterne and Fielding, as in Ben Jonson, we have "Every man in his humour." In some forms it implies the sense of a contradiction or conflict between the higher and lower phases of human nature: in others a full perception of the whole character, as in the *Canterbury Tales:* in others the power of isolating, and concentrating the attention on single features—a broad mouth, a prominent nose, an absorbing egotism or a rampant pomposity, which is the dominant note of the humour of Dickens. This, the least mellow and refined of its forms, is that which almost alone we find in

the New World. Our insular doubt as to the existence of American Humour is analogous to the French problem, "Can a German have *esprit?*" In both cases the qualities exist; but in rudimentary and often questionable shapes. Transatlantic Humour seldom penetrates to the undercurrents of life: it is the rare efflorescence of a people habitually grave, whose insight is more clear than deep: it relies mainly on exaggeration, and a blending of jest and earnest, which has the effect, as in their negro melodies, of singing comic words to a sad tune. Nine-tenths of it relies on the figures of hyperbole, antithesis, and anticlimax. Mr. Lowell, for example, makes us laugh, by instancing the description of a negro "so black that charcoal made a chalk mark upon him;" and of a wooden shingle "painted so like marble that it sank in the water." Other wits tell us—that a tree "was so tall that it took two men and a boy to see to the top of it;" that a boat "drew so little water it could sail wherever there had been a heavy dew;" that a man was "so heavy that his shadow, falling on a boy, killed him." Mr. Browne (Artemus Ward) excited the same kind of merriment by his remark, in pointing to the deliberately daubed canvas, which he called his panorama, "The highest part of this mountain is the top." The amusement in these and like instances is owing to a shock of surprise, produced by a falsehood plausibly pretending to be true, or by a truism pretending to be a novelty. Similarly, when the last-named writer, among his anecdotes of the conscription, informs us that "one young man who was draw'd, claimed to be exemp', because he was the only son of a widowed mother, who supported him," the jest is all in the unexpected turn of the last three words. Whereas the humour of Falstaff, of Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim, of Colonel Bath and the Vicar of Wakefield, of Sir Roger de Coverley, of Major Pendennis and Bishop Blougram, consists in its truth. What these people do or say never

surprises us: it is absurd, as much of human life is absurd; and laughing at them, we feel we are laughing at something in ourselves. Consequently we have an affection for them, and are never tired of them; whereas we never go back to the same circus with the same clown. An essay of Elia is a quiet fire, at which we can always warm ourselves: a Yankee joke is a cracker that, once pulled, has served its turn; we can never smile at it twice in one life; a mushroom of the Comic Weekly, it dies in the railway stall. Its author has his good things—his audience unfit though many—here, and must expect oblivion hereafter.

The records of American light literature, of course, supply numerous exceptions to this rule. Several of the generally satirical *jeux d'esprit* of the Colonial and Revolution days have still an historical as well as a local interest. In the age immediately succeeding, JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, fluent in versification as in oratory, shows considerable wit, if not humour, in his parody of Barlow's *Discoveries of Captain Davis*, and in his *Wants of Man*, which the following verses must serve to illustrate:—

"Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long;
'Tis not with me exactly so,
But 'tis so in the song.
My wants are many, and if told
Would muster many a score;
And were each wish a mint of gold,
I still should long for more.

"What first I want is daily bread,
And canvass-backs and wine;
And all the realms of nature spread
Before me when I dine.
Four courses scarcely can provide
My appetite to quell;
With four choice cooks from France beside,
To dress my dinner well.

. . . . . .

"I want the seals of power and place,
The ensigns of command;
Charged by the people's unbought grace
To rule my native land.
I want the voice of honest praise
To follow me behind,
And to be thought in future days
The friend of human kind."

. . . . . .

In the second quarter of the century—the first prolific age of American literature—we begin to see the divergence of two kinds of Humour; the one of the higher rank allied to dramatic imagination, the other leaning to burlesque. To the former belong much of the work of Washington Irving, Longfellow's *Kavanagh*, a few of the lighter passages of Hawthorne, as the *Seven Vagabonds*, and the prose and verse of Dr. HOLMES. In the three pleasant volumes by which this versatile author is probably best known to English readers, *The Autocrat*, *The Professor*, and *The Poet at the Breakfast Table*, there is much that might have been omitted, more that should have been condensed. They are overladen with puns; they bristle with jokes, good, bad, and indifferent, and are sometimes tainted with New England affectations. Many of the remarks that might have passed current in conversation seem scarce worthy of being set down in type. But Holmes, even while talking too fast, conciliates us by his constant kindliness: he exhibits to us, with a quaint mannerism not without its charm, personages, and situations, which we regard as odd and yet recognise as real. *The Autocrat* abounds in wise saws and instances similar to those above selected from *Elsie Venner*—interspersed with short sentences of pointed satire we find difficult to forget, *e.g.*—

"Nature, when she invented and manufactured authors, made critics of the chips that were left." "Sin has many tools, but a lie is the handle which fits them all." "Give us the luxuries of life and we will dispense with its necessaries." "A new lecture is just like any

other tool. We use it for a while with pleasure: then it blisters our hands and we hate to touch it." "Insanity is often the logic of an accurate mind overtasked. Good mental machinery *ought* to break its own wheels, if anything is thrust among them suddenly. . . . Stupidity often saves a man from going mad. We frequently see persons in insane hospitals sent there in consequence of what are called religious mental disturbances: I confess that I think better of them than of those who hold the same notions and remain outside."

In turning these pages we constantly come upon flashing paradoxes, and other coruscations of what has been called a kaleidoscopic wit. This volume also contains the author's best verses—some gay, as *The One Hoss Shay;* some grave, as *Musa, The Two Armies, The Nautilus;* others, as *The Old Man Dreams,* and *Spring has Come,* belonging to the borderland. Add the agreeable, because not too pronounced, flavour of sentiment, in the love story of the Schoolmistress, and we can understand how this book has enjoyed a wider popularity than its companions. In *The Poet at the Breakfast Table* there is less variety; but it contains the author's most amusing satire on scientific pedantry—

"'How do you think the vote is likely to go to-morrow?' I said.

'It isn't to-morrow,' he answered, 'it's next month.'

'Next month!' said I. 'Why, what election do you mean?'

'I mean the election to the Presidency of the Entomological Society, sir,' he creaked with an air of surprise, as if nobody could by any possibility have been thinking of any other. 'Great competition, sir, between the dipterists and the lepidopterists, as to which shall get in their candidate. Several close ballotings already; adjourned for a fortnight. Poor concerns both of 'em. Wait till our turn comes.'

'I suppose you are an entomologist?' I said, with a note of interrogation.

'Not quite so ambitious as that, sir. I should like to put my eyes on the individual entitled to that name. A *Society* may call itself an Entomological Society, but the man who arrogates such a broad title as that to himself, in the present state of science, is a pretender, sir, a dilettante, an impostor! No man can be truly called an entomologist, sir; the subject is too vast for any single human intelligence to grasp.'

'May I venture to ask,' I said, a little awed by his statement and manner, 'what is your special province of study?'

'I am often spoken of as a Coleopterist,' he said, 'but I have no

right to so comprehensive a name. The genus Scarabæus is what I have chiefly confined myself to, and ought to have studied exclusively. The beetles proper are quite enough for the labour of one man's life. Call me a Scarabeeist if you will: if I can prove myself worthy of that name, my highest ambition will be more than satisfied.'

'I think, by way of compromise and convenience, I shall call him the Scarabee. He has come to look wonderfully like those creatures, —the beetles, I mean—by being so much among them.'"

It also contains his most useful piece of advice; every year, among ourselves, more urgently required—

"So many foolish persons are rushing into print that it requires a kind of literary police to hold them back and keep them in order. Where there are mice there must be cats. . . . But the process is a cruel one at best, and it too often breeds a love of destructiveness for its own sake in those who get their living by it. . . . In speaking privately to young persons who have literary aspirations, one should be very considerate of their human feelings; but addressing them collectively, a few plain truths will not give any one of them much pain. . . . If I were a literary Pope sending out an Encyclical, I would tell these inexperienced persons that nothing is so common as to mistake an ordinary human gift for a special endowment . . . nobody, except editors and school teachers, and here and there a literary man, knows how common is the capacity of rhyming and prattling in readable prose, especially among young women of a certain degree of education . . . Using kind language I can talk pretty freely. I have counselled more than one aspirant after literary fame to go back to his tailor's board or his lapstone. . . . My advice to all the young men that write to me depends somewhat on the handwriting and spelling. If these are of a certain character, and they have reached a mature age, I recommend some honest manual calling, such as they have very probably been bred to, and which will, at least, give them a chance of being President of the United States, by and by, if that is any object to them."

Holmes's humour frequently finds vent in verse. Among the most salient of his efforts in this direction, *The Music Grinders*, *The Comet*, *The September Gale*, *The Height of the Ridiculous*, and *Evening by a Tailor*, frequently recall the drolleries of Hood. The following, entitled *Daily Trials, by a sensitive Man*, ought to find a sympathetic audience among the lovers of our tortured Leech, and the admirers of the slaughtered Babbage:—

"O there are times
When all this fret and tumult that we hear
Do seem more stale than to the sexton's ear
His own dull chimes.

. . . . . .

"At morning's call
The small-voiced pug-dog welcomes in the sun;
And flea-bit mongrels, wakening one by one,
Give answer all.

"When evening dim
Draws round us, then the lonely caterwaul,
Tart solo, sour duet, and general squall,—
These are our hymn.

"Women, with tongues
Like Polar needles, ever on the jar:
Men plugless word spouts, whose deep fountains are
Within their lungs.

"Children with drums
Strapped round them by the fond paternal ass,
Peripatetics with a blade of grass
Between their thumbs.

"Vagrants, whose arts
Have caged some devil in their mad machine,
Which grinding, squeaks, with husky groan between,
Come out by starts.

"Cockneys that kill
Thin horses of a Sunday,—men with clams,
Hoarse as young bisons roaring for their dams
From hill to hill.

"Soldiers with guns
Making a nuisance of the blessed air;
Child-crying bellmen, children in despair
Screeching for buns.

"Storms, thunders, waves!
Howl, crash, and bellow till you get your fill;
Ye sometimes rest; men never can be still
But in their graves."

It has been said that Dr. Holmes is "an expurgated American edition of Montaigne and Burton and the *Noctes*

Ambrosianæ," and that he mixes pathos and whimsicality after the manner of Sterne. His genius has, nevertheless, an original vein, less mellow, but as genuine as that of his masters.

Among other comparatively recent light verses we ought to mention—those of John G. Saxe, author of *The Proud Miss MacBride* (a vigorous Yankee version of *Miss Kilmansegg*), of the rattling *Rhyme of the Rail*, of the burlesque *Sonnet to a Clam*, and others of a similar character; also Charles Brooks, the poetic translator of Richter, whose apparently extempore verses never fail to exhibit a lively fancy and sharp-edged wit. Perhaps the origin of the broader school of Western humour is to be found in the first volume of the inimitable *Sam Slick*. Judge Haliburton seems to have set the keynote of the tunes which so many have since, with very various degrees of taste and skill, been playing; but his works lie beyond the scope of our survey. Several of the miscellaneous essays and periodicals of the first half of the century—as *Salmagundi*, the *Talisman* of Verplanck, Dana's *Idle Man*, John Sanderson's[1] *American in Paris*, the *Olipodiana* of W. G. Clarke, and, of a somewhat later date, Mr. Cozzen's *Sparrow-Grass Papers*—are enlivened by evidences of keen discrimination often brightly expressed. In others we trace the germs of a vicious style, which threatens to spread like the Colorado beetle, or like the western weed in river-beds. The *Charcoal Sketches* of Joseph Neal might be entitled comicalities of the Mississippi, and contain several flagrant examples of the habit of playing with slang terms, characteristic of his successors. An author who relies for effect on giving his imaginary personages such nicknames as "Dawson Dawdle," "Peter Ploddy," "Tippleton

[1] "In his humour," says Mr. Griswold, in one of his numerous damaging exaggerations, "are blended happily the characteristics of Rabelais, Sterne, and Lamb."

Tipps," and "Shiverton Shanks," is more likely to be the cause of wit in others than himself to be credited with the possession of it. During the last generation in America, the anxiety to be national has led many of her minor authors to make themselves ridiculous. To avoid walking like Englishmen they have gone on all fours: to escape the imputation of Anglo-Saxon, or still more of Norman features, they have painted their faces with ochre and put ear-rings through their nostrils: tabooing the speech of Addison and Steele, they have delighted themselves with a jargon of strange tongues. Some of their recent efforts to become perfectly original resemble nothing so much as the wriggling of those who undertake to expose the manner in which the Davenport brothers free themselves from the rope.

These censures by no means apply to the use of the Yankee dialect, in the verse portion of the *Biglow Papers*, where it is employed with propriety to give voice to the popular sentiments of that district of the country, which took the lead, on one side, of the great national struggle. Mr. Lowell further defends his dramatic *patois* as that of a "young language that has not made its fortune," rather than of "an old tongue fallen into decay;" and, maintaining that "vulgarisms are often only poetry in the egg, 'Was die Gans gedacht das der Schwan vollbracht,'" expresses his belief "that the ordinary talk of unlettered men among New Englanders is fuller of metaphor and of phrases that suggest lively images than that of any other people." This may be correct: no one has done more than the writer to induce us to think so. His humorous vein is by no means confined to his verse; for the satire in some of the prose portions of the same volume is alike true and incisive, never more so than when exposing the foibles of honest men, as well as quacks, in his own country. The Rev. Homer Wilbur's list of diplomas, from all manner of learned societies, is an obvious

reflection on the lavish granting of honorary degrees—not perhaps a prerogative of the Western hemisphere. His dog-Latin, his perpetual scraps of classical quotation, his interminable digressions, his prefaces interspersed with "brevis esse laboro," but cut short by the editor, might have warmed the heart of the elder Shandy: his peroration on slavery rivals the bombast of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine;* but he is always good, and often wise, as in this criticism, since historically vindicated—

"Mr. Calhoun cannot let go the apron-string of the Past. . . . He is the Sir Kay of a modern chivalry. He should remember the old Scandinavian mythus. Thor was the strongest of gods, but he could not wrestle with Time, nor so much as lift up a fold of the great snake; and when he smote the Earth, though with his terrible mallet, it was as if but a leaf had fallen. Yet all the while it seemed to Thor that he had only been wrestling with an old woman, striving to lift a cat, and striking a stupid giant on the head."

Wilbur's severity in dealing with the representatives of the Fourth Estate must be condoned by reference to circumstances purely Transatlantic. It would appear that, in America, newspapers are apt to trim, sometimes to lie, for the sake of popularity; "for which reason" the Rev. Homer "would derive the name *editor* not so much from *edo*, to publish, as from *edo*, to eat." Nor, if we are to accept as typical Mr. Lowell's "Notices of an Independent Press" on the *Biglow Papers*, are its criticisms always unbiassed, or perfectly original, or in the "Attic style." Take the following specimens :—

From the Universal Littery Universe.—"Full of passages which rivet the attention of the reader. . . . We consider this a unique performance. . . . We hope to see it soon introduced into our common schools. . . . We rejoice to meet with an author national enough to break away from the slavish deference, too common among us, to English grammar and orthography."

From the Higginbottomopolis Snapping Turtle.—"A collection of the merest balderdash and doggerel that it was ever our bad fortune to lay eyes on. The author is a vulgar buffoon, and the editor a talkative,

tedious old fool. We use strong language, but should any of our readers peruse the book (from which calamity Heaven preserve them!), they will find reasons for it thick as the leaves of Vallumbrozer, or, to use a still more expressive comparison, as the combined heads of author and editor. The book is wretchedly got up. . . . We should like to know how much *British gold* was pocketed by this libeller of our country and her purest patriots."

From the Comprehensive Tocsin (a tryweekly Family Journal).—"We love a book so purely objective. . . . Many of his pictures of natural scenery have an extraordinary subjective clearness and fidelity. . . . In fine, we consider this as one of the most extraordinary volumes of this or any age. We know of no English author who could have written it. It is a work to which the proud genius of our country, standing with one foot on the Aroostook and the other on the Rio Grande, and, holding up the star-spangled banner amid the wreck of matter and the crash of worlds, may point with bewildering scorn of the punier efforts of enslaved Europe."

In the next extract the writer aims across the sea, in one of the earliest and most effective of a long series of mimicries of a strange though familiar style—

From the World-Harmonic-Æolian-Attachment.—"While as highest author we reverence him whose works continue heroically unwritten, we have also our hopeful word for those who with pen (from wing of goose-loud-cackling or seraph God-commissioned) record the thing that is revealed. . . . Under mask of quaintest irony, we detect here the deep, storm-tost (nigh shipwrecked) soul, thunder-scarred, semiarticulate, but ever climbing hopefully toward the peaceful summits of an Infinite Sorrow. . . . Yes, thou poor forlorn Hosea, with Hebrew fire-flaming soul in thee, for thee also this life of ours has not been without its aspects of heavenliest pity and laughingest mirth. . . . To this soul also the necessity of creating somewhat has unveiled its awful front. If not Œdipuses and Electras and Alcestises, then in God's name Birdofredum Sawins. These also shall get born into the world and filch a Zingali subsistence therein."

The writer's strength as a humorist lies in satire and in parody: his insight is more keen than fine, and his frequent love of a broad grin is more freely indulged under a mask. His own violences are veiled under the roughness of Hosea: such eccentricities as the comparison of a newspaper to the Globe Theatre, such questionable phrases as, "I would do nothing hastily, nor presume to jog the elbow of Providence,"

are to be accredited as pedantries of the good Parson. Unfortunately our author, in his own person, constantly falls into his own traps. He has never thrown ridicule on jests or puns worse than those of his *Fireside Travels; e.g.* of our insular conceit he writes :—"Bull enters St. Peter's with the dome of St. Paul's drawn tight over his eyes like a criminal's cap, and ready for instant execution, rather than confess that the English Wren had not a stronger wing than the Italian Angel." Worse than this we can hardly imagine possible; but worse than this Mr. Lowell achieves in a *bêtise* on Byron's description of Velino, "Milton is the only man who ever got much poetry out of a cataract, and that was a cataract in his eye." The pedantry or slang of the following, from *My Study Windows*, casts that of Mr. Wilbur into the shade :—

"Men quote a platitude in either of these tongues" (Greek or Latin) "as droll to the uninitiated as the knighthood of free-masonry. . . . So powerful is this hallucination that we can conceive of *festina lente* as the favorite maxim of a Mississippi steamboat captain; and ἄριστον μὲν ὕδωρ cited as conclusive by a gentleman for whom the bottle before him reversed the wonder of the stereoscope, and substituted the Gascon *v* for the *b* in binocular." "We find it *cheaper* to make a specimen" of English iambics "than to borrow one." "We[1] confess a bibliothecarian avarice that gives all books a value in our eyes . . . we have a weakness even for those checker-board volumes that only fill up; we cannot breathe the thin air of that Pepysian self-denial, that Himalayan selectness which, content with one bookcase, would have no tomes in it but *porphyrogeniti*, books of the bluest blood, making room for choicer new-comers, by a continuous ostracism to the garret of present incumbents." "If he have any Buncombe constituency, it is that unrealised commonwealth of philosophers, which Plotinus proposed to establish; and if he were to make an almanack, his directions to farmers would be something like this: OCTOBER; *Indian Summer*, now is your time to get in your early

[1] The writer elsewhere somewhat inconsistently exclaims, "Rescue us from the gregarious mock modesty or cowardice of that "we" which shrills feebly throughout modern literature, like the shrieking of mice in the walls of a house that has passed its prime." Surely the rule is simple: "We" is the appropriate pronoun where one feels confident of speaking for a large number; "I" when one feels only entitled to speak for himself.

Vedas. . . . The *bother* with Mr. Emerson is that though he writes in prose he is essentially a poet."

We have found it cheaper to borrow than to make these instances, for the like are to be found in every chapter. But Mr. Lowell's judgments are often sound, where his expression is exceptionable: one is sometimes tempted to say, "Was der Schwan gedacht, das die Gans vollbracht." Where the question is one of broad human sympathies, the universally pathetic situations of war or of peace, of daring or of love, he is always reliable; but he has no clear standard of humour or of imagination. He admires such jokes as these—"Hell is a place where they don't rake up their fires, nights:" the slope was "so steep that chain lightning could not go down it, without putting the shoes on." His criticisms are always lively, those on Dante and the English classics of the fourteenth, sixteenth, and seventeenth centuries thoroughly appreciative; but he does scant justice to our Augustans, joins in the common cry against Pope, and in his treatment of some of the recent developments of our literature betrays a besetting and incapacitating Puritanism. In speaking of *Atalanta*, he commits himself to the assertion that "the hand is the hand of Swinburne, but the voice is the voice of Browning," adding in the next paragraph—

"Of the worst school of modern poetry . . . Mrs. Browning's *Aurora Leigh* is the worst example, whose muse is a *fast* young woman, with the lavish ornament and somewhat overpowering perfume of the *demi-monde*."

According to his views, the success of such books shows

"how utterly it (criticism) has forgotten its most earnest function of demolishing the high places where the unclean rights of Baal and Ashtaroth usurp on the worship of the one only True and Pure."

This and like outbursts of asceticism, surprising from a man of genius who has known so much of the world, only escape the imputation of cant because they are obviously sincere:

as counteractives to the opposite extreme, they are harmless. The prose fragments of *Hosea Biglow* have, unfortunately, set the example, in New England, of the spurious form of wit that relies on bad grammar and worse spelling, *e.g.*—

"DEER SIR—it's gut to be the fashun now to rite letters to the candid 8s, and i wus chose at a publick meetin in Quaalam to du wut was nessary fur that town. i writ to 271 ginerals and gut answers to 209. tha air called candid 8s but I dont see nothing candid about em. this here 1 wich I send was thought satty's factory."

With Mr. Lowell, however, this is a passing freak, like that of Mr. Thackeray, who could with impunity masquerade in *Yellow Plush*, or, as in *The Rose and the Ring*, cry boo to the children about a Christmas Tree, or, as in *Rebecca and Rowena* and the *Prize Novelists*, disport himself in a false face. But a life devoted to such antics, if not wasted, is hardly an object of ambition. We have no wish to detract from the literary merit, or to disparage the memory, of the amiable and generally-regretted "Artemus Ward," the most celebrated of the lighter or broader school of western humorists. There was nothing in his genius of the tragic element that made almost pathetic the representations of the unapproachable actor Robson; but Mr. BROWNE is affectionately remembered as a man of wit and talent, whose refinement of manner conciliated the severest critics. His work is only the perfection of a spurious art; but he wins our regard by the good-humour that smiles alongside of the satire that scathes; disarms censure by laughing at himself, and eludes all suspicion of vulgarity, by never pretending to be other than he was—the son of an old New-England Jackson democrat of the middle-class, who saw through the braggadocio and corruption of either party, and did good service by exposing them in his vivid caricatures. We have no call to criticise minutely, or frequently to quote from, the often irresistible pages of this popular favourite. Who is not familiar with the showman, to whose show editors

were "as welcome as flowers in May," with his "wax-figgers" rusting up and down the States: denounced as a "man of sin" by the Shaker Elder: imposed on by the Octoroon: listening to the Union orators and to Piccolomini: entertained by the Mormons: interviewing Albert Edward, President Lincoln, beset by "office seekers coming down the chimney," and Prince Napoleon: dominated by the "screaming eagle" of the Confederacy; escaping home to Betsy Jane; willing to surrender to his country "even his wife's relations," and ready with such good advice as "Always live within your income, even if you have to borrow money to do so." His later experiences of Richmond have a keener edge: one man tells him—

"There's bin a tremendious Union feelin here from the fust. But we was kepp down by a rain of terror. Have you a dagerretype of Wendell Philipps about your person, and will you lend me four dollars for a few days, till we air once more a happy and united people? . . . Jeff Davis" of whom he had written, "It had been better than ten dollars in his pocket if he had never been born", "is not pop'lar here. She is regarded as a Southern sympathiser. & yet, I am told he was kind to his parents. She ran away from 'em many years ago and has never been back. This was showin 'em a great deal of consideration. . . . His capture in female apparel confooses me in regard to his sex . . . and I guess he feels so hisself."

In England, Ward is equally vivacious; whether admiring that "sweet boon" the Tower of London, reading the speeches of our statesmen, commenting on the tombs of our poets—among whom he regrets that Chaucer did not know how to spell—or quizzing himself in the newspaper report of his Lectures—

"It was a grand scene, Mr. Artemus Ward standing on the platform talking; many of the audience sleeping tranquilly on their seats; others leaving the room and not returning; others crying like a child at some of the jokes;—all, all formed a most impressive scene, and showed the powers of this remarkable orator. And when he announced that he should never lecture in that town again, the applause was absolutely deafening."

As a sufficient illustration of his later style, we may take the following :—

"One day I whacked this leopard more than ushil, which elissited a remonstrance from a tall gentleman in spectacles, who said, 'My good man, do not beat the poor caged animal. Rather fondle him.'

"'I'll fondle him with a club,' I ansered, hitting him another whack.

"'I prithy desist,' said the gentleman ; 'stand aside, and see the effeck of kindness. I understand the idiosyncracies of these creeturs better than you do.'

"With that he went up to the cage, and thrustin his face in between the iron bars, he said soothingly, 'Come hither, pretty creetur.'

"The pretty creetur come-hithered raythor speedy, and seized the gentleman by the whiskers, which he tore off about enuff to stuff a small cushion with.

"He said, 'You vagabone, I'll have you indicted for exhibitin dangerous and immoral animals.'

"I replied, 'Gentle sir, there isn't a animal here that hasn't a beautiful moral, but you mustn't fondle 'em. You mustn't meddle with their idiotsyncracies.'

"The gentleman was a dramatic cricket, and he wrote a article for a paper, in which he said my entertainment was a decided failure.

"As regards Bears, you can teach 'em to do interestin things, but they're onreliable. I had a very large grizzly bear once, who would dance, and larf, and lay down, and bow his head in grief, and give a mournful wale, etsetry. But he often annoyed me. It will be remembered that on the occasion of the first battle of Bull Run, it suddenly occurd to the Fed'ral soldiers that they had business in Washington which ought not to be neglected, and they all started for that beautiful and romantic city, maintainin a rate of speed durin the entire distance that would have done credit to the celebrated French steed *Gladiateur*. Very nat'rally our Gov'ment was deeply grieved at this defeat ; and I said to my Bear shortly after, as I was givin a exhibition in Ohio—I said, 'Brewin, are you not sorry the National arms has sustained a defeat?' His business was to wale dismal, and bow his head down, the band (a barrel orgin and a wiolin) playing slow and melancholy music. What did the grizzly old cuss do, however, but commence darncin and larfin in the most joyous manner? I had a narrer escape from being imprisoned for disloyalty.

"I will relate another incident in the career of this retchid Bear. I used to present what I called in the bills a Beautiful livin' Pictur, showing the Bear's fondness for his Master ; in which I'd lay down on a piece of carpeting, and the Bear would come and lay down beside me, restin his right paw on my breast, the Band playing *Home, Sweet*

Home very soft and slow. Altho' I say it, it was a tuchin thing to see. I've seen Tax-Collectors weep over that performance.

"Well, one day I said, 'Ladies and gentlemen, we will now show you the Bear's fondness for his master,' and I went and laid down. I tho't I observed a pecooliar expression into his eyes, as he rolled clumsily to'ards me, but I didn't dream of the scene which follerd. He laid down, and put his paw on my breast. 'Affection of the Bear for his master,' I repeated. 'You see the monarch of the Western Wilds in a subjugated state. Fierce as these animals natrally are, we now see that they have hearts and can love. This bear, the largest in the world, and measurin seventeen feet round the body, loves me as a mer-ther loves her che-ild!' But what was my horror when the grizzly and infamus Bear threw his other paw *under* me, and riz with me to his feet. Then claspin me in a close embrace he waltzed up and down the platform in a frightful manner, I yellin with fear and anguish. To make matters wuss, a low scurrilus young man in the audience hollered out—

"'Playfulness of the Bear! Quick moosic!'

"I jest 'scaped with my life. The Bear met with a wiolent death the next day, by being in the way when a hevily loaded gun was fired off by one of my men."

In vindication of Mr. Browne's broadest burlesque, we must remark that it is always directed against mean or ridiculous things. Unfortunately his example has paved, for those who have caught the trick of his phrase, and who are unrestrained by his good feeling and good sense, an easy descent to the buffoonery of making noble things appear mean or ridiculous. It is necessary in some measure to identify so general a charge; but, as the names of those who supply mental garbage (a species of food in great and increasing demand[1]) should be left to sink into the oblivion from which they have unfortunately emerged, I shall refer to some of the worst of these caterers to a corrupted and corrupting taste, by their self-assumed titles. War, especially civil war, doubtless develops some of the meanest of national vices, as well as some of the noblest of national virtues: the former are as fair subjects for the satirist as the latter for the orator and lyrist; but the satires of Major

[1] See extract at end of vol. from *Theophrastus Such*.

Jack Downing, Orpheus C. Kerr, and Petroleum V. Nasby are more like the grimaces of wearied clowns than the indignant protest of reformers. The letters of the first, as far as they are more than mere ribaldry, express the vindictiveness of a Union Democrat against the gradual Abolition policy of the President, whom it is the main object of the book to exhibit in a contemptible light.

One of his best jokes is the following, addressed by the Majer to "Linkin," otherwise called the "Kernel":—

"You see the whole country has got the gripes and shakes, jest as you had a little while ago, and it all came from Seward's wrong kind of medicen. You see Seward is trying to make the people swallow the 'irrespressible conflict,' which is fixed about as follows:—

"Higher Law	2 oz.
Confiscation	2 oz.
Taxation	2 oz.
Justice	0 oz.
Abolition	8 oz.

(Well mixed)."

The writer's political foresight is seen in one passage, where his wrath makes him almost forget his slang. The President has dreamt that the negroes have destroyed the Union—

"Wal," ses I, "Kernel, you get nearer the truth in your dreams than you ginrally do when you are wide awake. If you will only have another dream you will see that the Abolitionists have killed the Union, and that the poor nigger is only the means that they have used to do it."

Finally, we must apologise for shocking our readers by a passage which will justify our remarks—

"'The majer' has a dream of the funeral of the 'War Dimmicracy,' to which he belongs. Sumner, Greeley, Welles, and Chase have rammed underground in various coffins—'habeas corpus,' 'trial by jury,' 'the Union,' and 'the Constitution.' Mr. Lincoln, who figures in the dream, asks of the last, 'Do you think it will stay down?' And old Greenbacks, ses he, 'My God, Kernel, it must stay *down*, or we will all go up.' . . . Greeley was tickled eenamost to death . . . And there too stood Beecher, with a nigger baby in his arms, lookin

up to heaven, and prayin all the while as follows: 'Oh! Lord, not thy will but mine be done.'"

Petroleum V. Nasby, on the other side, is a "Republican;" but, even according to a professed admirer, his "merciless pictures of the lowest elements in the Western States" are coarse and broad. "The Orpheus Kerr Papers," with somewhat less personality and approach to blasphemy than those of Downing, are conceived and composed in a similar style. Mr. G. A. Sala introduces them with a phrase that, although otherwise intended, is sufficiently damnatory. "They are," he says, "but a printed mass of cachinnation at events, at which the rest of the world were sorrowfully wondering." Nero, who fiddled when Rome was burning, had at least some claim to be an artist; but Mr. Kerr's broad grins are simply those of a buffoon. The value of his attacks on profligate army contractors, mismanaged campaigns, and bunkum patriotism, is destroyed by their want of discrimination, and the total absence of any background of seriousness. Interspersed with dull parodies of the leading poets and novelists, and incessant lampoons on the statesmen and soldiers of his country, the main impression of his book is the record of a war between two hulking squads of drunkards, knaves, fools, and braggarts. The following, for example, is his account of Bull's Run:—

"We have met the enemy at last, my boy; but I don't see that he is ours. We went after him with flying banners, and I noticed when we came back that they were flying still. . . . I casually remark that the Mackeral Brigade occupy the post of honour to the left of Bull Run, which they also left on the day we celebrated."

See also his report of the composition of the armies—

"Two Arabs are expected here to-morrow to take command of Irish brigades; and General Bleuker will probably have two Aztecs to assist him in his German division."

Or of the managers of the Commissariat—

"They went into the nearest graveyard, dug up all the tombstones,

and put them into an old quartz-crushing machine, pounded them to powder, sent the powder to the coast, and sold it to the Britishers for the very best flour at twelve dollars and a half a barrel! And can such a people as this be conquered by a horde of godless rebels! Never! I repeat it, sir—never!"

The following is the acme of Mr. Kerr's refined irony :—

"The eagle, my boy, has spread its sanguinary wings for a descent upon the bantams of secession, and if we permit his sublime pinions to be burdened with the shackles of domestic sedition, we are guilty of that which we do, and are otherwise liable to the charge of committing that which we perform. These thoughts came into my mind yesterday, after I had taken the Oath six times, and so overpowered me that I again took the Oath, with a straw in it. . . .

'The God of Bottles be our aid
When rebels crack us;
We'll bend the bottle-neck to him,
And he will Bacchus.'"

English critics, the most severe, from Dickens on "Eden" to Charles Mackay, are eulogists or rose-colour apologists compared with American satirists of their own soil; they have so overdone their work that any one, accepting their representations as even proximately correct, might well ask who would "fight for such a land!" Comparatively unobjectionable but equally shallow are *Elbow Room* and *Out of the Hurly-Burly* by Max Adeler, and the Californian sketches of "John Phœnix."

Less political, more social, sometimes amusing, though belonging to the same school of Art, are the aphorisms, remarks, reflections, and commentaries of "Josh Billings." Mr. E. P. Hingston, the showman's showman, introduces this volume with a statement that he at one time believed it to be the production of President Lincoln; but, on inquiry, found it due to an auctioneer, the successor of Lowell and Browne, "uno avulso non deficit alter," as "the popular man wearing the cap and bells, and reflecting the humour of his land." The author is, he adds, "*the* comic essayist of America." A little of him is, we are told, "more effective in doing good

than the best sermon a foreign friend could preach" to his countrymen. The objects of Mr. Billings' satire, which, though generally of a minor description (as quack advertisements, sham sentiment, absurd caucuses, etc.), are worth attacking by those who have no higher game; but I must plead Mr. Hingston's comparison with Thomas Hood, and the recognition of his author in our journals as a leading American humorist, in excuse for the space given to the following extracts, in illustration of his style :—

"Rize arly, work hard and late, live on what yu kant sell, giv nothing awa, and if yu dont die ritch, and go tu the devil, you ma sue me for damages." "There is one thing I kant never forget, nor I hain tried to, and that is the fust time I kissed a gal." "If I was asked, What is the cheif end of man now a daze? I should immegiatly repli, 10 per cent." To the Hair Oil and Vegetable Bitters man, "I rubbed a drop or two on the head of my cane, which has been bald for more than 5 years, and beggar me! if I don't have to shave the cane handle every day before I can walk out with it." He insures his life, and is asked, among others, the following questions :—"Are yu mail or femail? If so, please state how long you have been so." "Do you believe in a futer state? If you du, state it." "Have yu ever committed suiside? and if so, how did it seem to affect yu?" On Female Eddikashun : "I haven't enny doubt that you could eddicate wimmin so muchly that tha wouldn't kno enny more about getting dinner than some ministers ov the gospel kno about preaching; and while tha might translate one ov Virgil's ecklogs tu a spot, tha couldn't translate a baby out ov a kradle, without it cum apart." "There is 2 things in this life for which we are never fully prepared, and that iz twins." "It is treating a man like a dog tew cut him short in his narrative." Advice to his daughters : "Eat slate pencils; tha will make you spri at figgers. Let yure petticoats drag on the sidewalks, and if enny man steps on them and tares oph the rim, slap his chops at once." "If yu want tew git a sure crop, and a big yield for the seed, sow wilde oats." "Truth is stranger than ficshun—that iz, tew some folks." "Menny a book has bin writ which proved to be an obituary notice ov the author." "Honesta is the best polisy—but dont take my word for it; tri it." "A man running for offiss puts me in minde ov a dog that's lost—he smells ov everybody he meets, and wags hisself all over." "We would sa tu moste writers, Write often and publish seldom; secondly, to sum writers, Write seldom, and publish seldemmer." "Manifest destiny iz the science ov going tew the devil, or enny other place before yu git there." "Familiarity breeds contempt—this iz so; jist as soon as we git familiarized with castor

ile, for instance, we contempt it." "Giv the devil his due, but be very careful that there aint mutch due him." "Munny is like promises, easier made than kept." "Misfortin and twins hardly ever cum singly." "Matches may be *made* in heaven, but they are generally *sold* down here." "Man was kreated a little lower than the angels, and has bin gettin a little lower ever since." "We hate those who will not take our advice, and despise them who do." "Moral swashun consis in asking a man tu do what he ought to do without askin, and then beggin his pardon if he refuses to do it." "God save the phools! and dont let them run out, for if it want for them wise men couldn't get a livin." "The fust law ov natur iz tu steal; the sekund, tu hide; and third iz tu—steal agin." "Woman will sometimes confess her sins, but I never knu one tu confess her faults." "Tew be a suckcessful pollytysian a man shud be buttered on both sides, and then keep awa from the fire." "Things I don't hanker after to see: A man out at the elbows, and his wife out tew a woman's rites convenshun. A virgin who haz beat 40, afrade ov a rane bo. A man whose house wants painting a different colour from his nose. A house so divided agin itself that it dont kno which way tew fall." "Man was made to mourn—this was the private opinion of one Burns, a Skotchman, who was very edikated tew poetry from his infansy. I and he differ, which is not uncommon among grate minds. . . . Man warnt made tew mourn; man was made tew laff."

Jam satis. We will not say of Mr. Billings' book, with the senator quoted by Mr. Hingston, that it "is like Pandora's box — the more you stir it the worse it smells." Some of his remarks are shrewd, and many ludicrous; but the majority are vulgar, and infected by the fallacy indicated by the last quotation. The Americans are perhaps the gravest people in the world: therefore their notion of Humour—generally, as we have indicated, a superficial one—is of something contrary to real life. Their conception of wit is, like that of the pseudo-metaphysical poets, justly decried by Dr. Johnson.[1] They laugh of malice prepense; and in, as well as out of, the pulpit are apt to flaunt their eccentricities,

[1] "If," he remarks, "that be considered as wit which is at once natural and new, that which, though not obvious, is upon its first production acknowledged to be just, if it be that which he that never found it wonders how he missed; to wit of this kind poets have seldom risen. Their thoughts are often new but seldom natural; they are not obvious, but neither are they just; the reader, far from wondering that he missed them, wonders by which perverseness of thought they were ever found."

and confound the genial glow of genuine comedy with the "flat, stale, and unprofitable" mountebankeries of the farce. The master of this degenerate style is a writer to whom it is hard to do neither more nor less than justice: his success is, relatively, so far in advance of his deserts, that we have to resist the temptation to depreciate his really great, though, as seems to me, often misused ability. He has aimed at and attained an enormous popularity. It is probable that, to the lower class of British Philistines, American prose is, at this day, represented not so much by Irving, Emerson, or Hawthorne, as by "Mark Twain," who has done perhaps more than any other living writer to lower the literary tone of English speaking people. The most conspicuous intellectual trait of Mr. CLEMENS seems to me an almost preternatural shrewdness, thinly veiled under an assumption of simplicity. He knows perfectly what he is about, and is able to turn every incident or circumstance to his advantage. He prefixes a recent paper, *The Idle Excursion*, with the remark, "All the journeyings I have done had been purely in the way of business. The pleasant May weather suggested a novelty, a trip for pure recreation, the bread and butter element left out:" but he writes seventy pages about the trip; and so provides for the element ostentatiously neglected. Of the alarming tribe of recent American cynics he is the most genuine. He hates humbug and cant, and nothing delights him more than to run a tilt at copy-book texts. It goes without saying that his "bad little boy," will prosper, and his "good little boy" come to grief; or that he will give an absurd turn to the story of Washington and the cherry-tree. Romance and sentiment, in either continent, fare equally at his hands: "Old masters" at Milan, Florence, and Rome are served in the same manner as the journalists in Tennessee; he writes his text to the sketch of a weazened hag perched on

the summit of the Loreley Rock; makes a grimace at the Pyramids; puts his finger to his nose among the Alps; and, as it were, turning the statues in the Louvre, the Uffizi, and the Vatican, upside down, inspects their legs. But, if his scepticism is intense, his morality is truculent: he visits the tomb of Abelard, and pronounces a blessing on his semi-assassins; and his blushes are blent with curses over Regent Street. Mark Twain's attraction is due in great measure to his freshness: he is not an imitator; he does not rely on books—though his writings evince a more than average culture: he is a parodist of his own experience, to which he holds up a mirror, like one of the round balls in German gardens.

> "Life's a jest, and all things show it;
> I thought so once, and now I know it,"

is the refrain of his philosophy. His satire, unlike that of "Billings," is conveyed not so much in dogmatic sentences as in often dramatic narrative, *e.g.* in all that relates to his Western real or imagined adventures, among which *How I Edited an Agricultural Paper* is the most savage attack on newspapers I have anywhere seen. He is, however, capable of condensation, as in the following—one of the keenest of the sarcasms that rely on the favourite Transatlantic figure, hyperbole. It is an editor's "answer to an inquiry from the coming man"—

> "*Young Author.*—Yes, Agassiz does recommend authors to eat fish, because the phosphorus in it makes brains. So far you are correct. But I cannot help you to a decision about the amount you need to eat—at least, not with certainty. If the specimen composition you send is about your usual average, I should judge that perhaps a couple of whales would be all you would want for the present. Not the largest kind; but simply good, middling-sized whales."

One of this writer's most successful tricks is to say exactly the opposite of what he means; another is an assumption of modesty, and habit of pretending to laugh at himself. Unsophisticated people are consoled for their own stupidity by

the reflection that so brilliant a person had a distant relation who was hanged, and that he himself has been so often duped: (*e.g.* by Artemus Ward, by his watchmaker, by the Limerick Indians at Niagara), and has made such a bad map of Paris. The initiated will incline to find a more genuine leaf from the author's autobiography in *My first Literary Venture*. Mr. Clemens' satire is often trenchant, seldom fine: it wants the background of good humour which softens that of Mr. Browne. It is more vicious, without any of the grandeur which elevates the malignity of Swift—an author to whom America has produced no proximate parallel. His Western sketches are vivid—we doubt not veracious—and may be useful as deterrents to heedless intending emigrants. His simpler narratives are among his best, and give free play to the remarkable observing powers which stand him in good stead in his records of European travel. Of the two series of those—for *The New Pilgrim's Progress* is but a continuation of *The Innocents Abroad*—the *Tramp Abroad* is in some respects the best. It is more to the point, less ambitious than its predecessors, and its irreverences are less jarring. "Mark Twain," who seems quite out of place in the Desert and on the Sea of Galilee, is at home on the Righi Railroad, as the looker-on at a German students' duel, and a moral lounger at Baden-Baden. The Riffelberg is his altitude; we can scarce imagine him risking the Riffelhorn. The *Tramp* is, on the whole, an excellent guide-book, illustrated by jokes and cuts excluded from the dry dignity of Murray or Bædecker, and with almost as precise practical information as the last. Many travellers from England, as well as America, will be grateful to Mr. Clemens for his thoroughly reliable information as to the *douceurs* legitimately due to the porter, boots, and chambermaid of German hotels, for periods of residence ranging from one day to six months. The most amusing part of this book is in the Appendices, especially

those on the use of the Heidelberg Tun, and on "the awful German language," The following gives expression to common griefs :—

"I translate this from a conversation in one of the best of the German Sunday-school books :—'*Gretchen.*—Wilhelm, where is the Turnip? *Ans.*—She has gone to the kitchen. Where is the accomplished and beautiful English maiden? It has gone to the opera. . . .' There are some exceedingly useful words in this language. . . . The word *Schlag* means blow, stroke, dash, hit, shock, clap, slap, time, bar, coin, stamp, kind, sort, manner, way, apoplexy, wood-cutting, enclosure, field, forest-clearing. This is its simple and *exact* meaning —that is to say, its restricted, its fettered meaning; but there are ways in which you can set it free, so that it can soar away, as on the wings of the morning, and never be at rest. You can hang any word you please to its tail, and make it mean anything you want to. You can begin with *Schlag-ader*, which means artery, and you can hang on the whole dictionary, word by word, clear through the alphabet to *Schlag-wasser*, which means bilge-water, and including *Schlag-mutter*, which means mother-in-law. Just the same with *Zug*. . . . One cannot overestimate the usefulness of *Schlag* and *Zug*. Armed just with these two, and the word *Also*, what cannot the foreigner on German soil accomplish? . . . In the hospital yesterday a word of thirteen syllables was successfully removed from a patient—a North German from near Hamburg; but as most unfortunately the surgeons had opened him in the wrong place, under the impression that he contained a panorama, he died. . . . Some German words are so long that they have a perspective. . . . These things are not words, they are alphabetical processions. . . . One can open a German newspaper any time and see them marching majestically across the page; and if he has any imagination he can see the banners and hear the music too. . . . Here are some specimens: *Generalstaatsverordneteubersamerlungen. Wiederherrstellungsbestehungen. Waffenstillstandsunterhandlungen. Kinderbewahrungsaustalten.*"

After more of the same reasonable remonstrance he winds up with suggestions for reform, all, except perhaps the last, more or less practical.

"In the first place, I would leave out the dative case. It confuses the plurals; and besides, nobody ever knows when he is in the dative case. . . . In the next place, I would move the verb further up to the front. You may load up with ever so good a verb, but I notice that you never really bring down a subject with it at the present German range—you only cripple it. . . . Thirdly, I would import some strong words from the English tongue. . . . Fourthly, I would

re-organise the sexes, and distribute them according to the will of the Creator. This as a tribute of respect, if nothing else. . . . Fifthly, I would do away with these great long compounded words, or require the speaker to deliver them in sections, with intermissions for refreshments. . . . Intellectual food is like any other; it is pleasanter and more beneficial to take it with a spoon than a shovel. Sixthly, I would require a speaker to stop when he is done, and not hang a string of these useless 'haben sind gewesen gehabt haben geworden seins,' to the end of his oration. . . . Seventhly, I would discard the parenthesis. . . . I would require every individual, be he high or low, to unfold a plain straightforward tale, or else coil it and sit on it and hold his peace. . . . Eighthly and lastly, I would retain *Zug* and *Schlag*, with their pendants, and discard the rest of the vocabulary. This would simplify the language. . . . These are perhaps all that I could be expected to name for nothing. . . . My philological studies have satisfied me that a gifted person ought to learn English (barring spelling and pronouncing) in thirty hours, French in thirty days, and German in thirty years."

In common with graver writers, Mark Twain is in danger of rapaciously mining out his vein of ore. His last volume might have marred, but could never have made, a reputation. *The Stolen White Elephant* is a satire on detectives, in which it is hard to detect a chance to smile; *Punch, brothers, Punch,* is a joke at which we can only once laugh; *The Decay of Lying,* an evidence of the decay of invention; *Crime in Connecticut,* a lame travesty of Edgar Poe's *William Wilson.* The Nemesis of persistent parody is that, like the cultivation of the tobacco plant, it exhausts the soil. The successful writer of burlesques seldom succeeds in anything else. Mr. Clemens' most ardent admirers cannot read his *Pauper and Prince.* There is something almost ineffably pathetic in his own half-unconscious forecast of his own literary lot in one of the earliest of his books, *The Mississippi Pilot,* where his keen eye and quick wit, as yet undimmed by the strain of a professional jester, are displayed to their best advantage,—where the puns spring up naturally as the foam-bells on the great stream itself. The space given to the following extract is justified by the fact that it is an unintentional, but weighty,

apologue of the whole tribe in whose ranks the author has elected to enlist himself,—as we consider, unhappily, for the passage gives evidence of far higher capacities. He is speaking of the acquired instincts, the second nature of the pilot :—

"The face of the water, in time, became a wonderful book . . . not to be read once and thrown aside, for it had a new storey to tell every day. Throughout the long twelve hundred miles, there was never a page that was void of interest. . . . There never was so wonderful a book written by man . . . the passenger who could not read this book saw nothing but all manner of pretty pictures in it, painted by the sun and shaded by the clouds, whereas to the trained eye these were not pictures at all, but the grimmest and most dead earnest of reading matter. Now when I had mastered the language of this water, and had come to know every trifling feature that bordered the great river as familiarly as I knew the letters of the alphabet, I had made a valuable acquisition. But . . . I had lost something which could never be restored to me while I lived. All the grace, the beauty, the poetry had gone out of the majestic river! I still keep in mind a certain wonderful sunset which I witnessed when steamboating was new to me. A broad expanse of the river was turned to blood ; in the middle distance the red hue brightened into gold, through which a solitary log came floating, black and conspicuous ; in one place a long, slanting mark lay sparkling upon the water ; in another the surface was broken by boiling, tumbling rings, that were as many-tinted as an opal; where the ruddy flush was faintest, was a smooth spot, that was covered with graceful circles and radiating lines, ever so delicately traced ; the shore on our left was densely wooded, and the sombre shadow that fell from this forest was broken in one place by a long, ruffled trail that shone like silver ; and high above the forest wall a clean-stemmed dead tree waved a single leafy bough that glowed like a flame in the unobstructed splendour that was flowing from the sun. There were graceful curves, reflected images, woody heights, soft distances ; and over the whole scene, far and near, the dissolving lights drifted steadily, enriching it, every passing moment, with new marvels of colouring.

"I stood like one bewitched. I drank it in, in a speechless rapture. The world was new to me, and I had never seen anything like this at home. But as I have said, a day came when I began to cease noting the glories and the charms which the moon and the sun and the twilight wrought upon the river's face ; another day came when I ceased altogether to note them. Then, if that sunset scene had been repeated, I would have looked upon it without rapture, and would have commented upon it, inwardly, after this fashion : This sun means that we are going to have wind to-morrow ; that floating log means that the river is rising, small thanks to it ; that slanting mark on the water refers to a bluff reef which is going to kill somebody's steamboat one of these

nights, if it keeps on stretching out like that; those tumbling 'boils' show a dissolving bar and a changing channel there; the lines and circles in the slick water over yonder are a warning that that execrable place is shoaling up dangerously; that silver streak in the shadow of the forest is the 'break' from a new snag, and he has located himself in the very best place he could have found to fish for steamboats; that tall, dead tree, with a single living branch, is not going to last long, and then how is a body ever going to get through this blind place at night without the friendly old landmark?

"No, the romance and the beauty were all gone from the river. All the value any feature of it ever had for me now was the amount of usefulness it could furnish toward compassing the safe piloting of a steamboat. Since those days, I have pitied doctors from my heart. What does the lovely flush in a beauty's cheek mean to the doctor but a 'break' that ripples above some deadly disease? Are not all her visible charms sown thick with what are to him the signs and symbols of hidden decay? Does he ever see her beauty at all, or doesn't he simply view her professionally, and comment upon her unwholesome condition all to himself? And doesn't he sometimes wonder whether he has gained most or lost most by learning his trade?"

"De te fabula narratur." Who would have thought that the writer of this fine description and eloquent parable, elsewhere in his pages unequalled, would have fallen into the very trap, error, and sin against which he warns his readers! The "father of waters" is "an image of the mighty world;" the trained pilot, the hardened doctor, is the professional humorist, who has lost the power of seeing the beauty of the universe, because he has come to regard it as a mere text-book for his sadly incessant and ultimately wearisome jests. The price we have to pay for always making others laugh is never being able to admire, seldom even to laugh heartily ourselves. Not only Lear's Fool, but his whole kith and kin, have been, if among the wisest, also among the most melancholy of men.

Ten years ago a volume of travels, entitled the *Egyptian Sketchbook*, was published by Mr. Charles C. Leland, and noticed in the "Saturday Review" in a manner which leaves us nothing but to extract from the critique, and so incidentally from the book, which is another conspicuous example of the style we are reprobating.

"In the first place, however funny he (the author) may be, he thinks himself funnier than he is. He makes a great many jokes which are simply failures, and others which we are afraid are simply vulgar. . . . There is, to our taste, no genuine fun in the use of that peculiar slang which has become the staple of the would-be American humorists. We are not really amused when Mr. Leland says 'as followethly' instead 'of follows.' . . . We even decline to laugh at the following sentence: "If a thing of beauty be a jaw for ever, as the American husband said of his handsome scolding wife, then the donkey boys of Cairo are the most jaw-ous and beautiful creatures on the face of the earth; for the sound of their voices drieth not up, and wheresoever thou goest they go, and their ways are thy ways, and thy people their people—if they can get hold of them. . . ."

After remarking, without fear of contradiction, that bad puns and flippancy do not constitute humour, the "Saturday" proceeds to adduce another crucial case—

"Alexander Historicus declares the Egyptians got all they knew from the Jews by way of Abraham, who set up an office for fortune-telling in Heliopolis, and gave lessons in astrology to the chief priests; issuing, I suppose, little cards on which was inscribed, 'Predicts marriages, shows the face of your future husband, recovers stolen goods by the planets. Gentlemen, one dollar; second storey, back building. *N.B.*—Ring at the gate.'"

There is so much in this volume of the same poor stuff, that we are surprised it should have been written by the author of a volume claiming notice on historical or ethnological, if not on literary grounds. For the mixture of dialects in his *Breitmann Ballads*, Mr. Leland may plead the widespread use of the mongrel German-Yankee with which he plays, and the tendency of the half-intoxicated Teuton to sentiment and metaphysics, ridiculed in the verse—

"Hans Breitmann gife a barty,
Vhere ish dat barty now?
Vhere ish de lofely golden cloud,
Dat float on de moundain's prow?

"Vhere ish de hummelstrahlende stern,
De shtar of de shpirits light?
All goned afay mit de lager beer,
Afay in de ewigkeit."

But the original success of this drollery has misled the author into becoming tiresome, because he does not seem to be aware of the fact that it can only be appreciated in small doses, and his experiments in ordinary English are unsuccessful. Emerson somewhere says that in America "the coxcomb goes to the wall": we may add for him, "beware lest the buffoon take his place." The Downings, Kerrs, Adelers, Breitmanns, and Twains are the gadflies and mosquitoes of literature. The writers are of various, sometimes conspicuous talent; but their works appeal to the irreverence of an age, whose note is contempt for the past and disbelief in the future, when the half-stripped Ballet and *Opera Comique* have almost driven the higher drama from the stage,—when comic histories, grammars, and travels, are paving the way for comic Dantes and a comic Bible; the age of burlesque and *βωμολοχία*. True humour, as in all classics, must go hand in hand with seriousness. The genuine humorist never forgets that behind the comic there is a tragic element in human life, and that the mere farce is as unnatural as is the expression of a countenance distorted, like that of Hugo's hero, by a continual grin. In forgetfulness of this lies the greatest danger of the recent literature of America; and we can only look to the highest instincts and tendencies of her people to detect and contemn and resist it.

We must conclude with a brief estimate of a writer peculiarly typical of some later phases of the civilisation and thought of his country. Mr. BRET HARTE, though born in the State of New York, may, in virtue of his residence in the West from early youth to maturity, be regarded as a Californian. By virtue of this fact, and his Dutch descent, as well as his incomparably wider grasp of life, he is able to represent, with much more force and fulness than Mr. Leland, the amalgam of nationalities of which the Union is now composed. After Joaquin Miller, he is the first to set to music,

of mirth or mourning, the voices of the Pacific. In opening his volume, we give Yankeedom the slip: we leave behind us Wall Street and the Hudson, Boston, and Concord, the Maine woods and the St. Lawrence, to listen to the clink of hammers in Nevada mines, the oaths of gamblers in Calaveras, the clatter of Chiquita's hoofs, and the growl of the grizzly in rocky cañons,—to watch the "wampum dyes" of "Indian autumn skies" over the "Sierra's crest," or the long roll of the ocean with messages from Cathay. His lines to San Francisco strike the note of a new patriotism—

"Serene, indifferent of fate,
Thou sittest at the Eastern Gate;
Upon thy heights so lately won
Still slant the banners of the sun;
Thou seest the white seas strike their tents,
O warder of two continents.
And scornful of the peace that flies
Thy angry winds and sullen skies,
Thou drawest all things, small or great,
To thee beside the Western Gate."

Mr. Harte's experience appears to have been varied: as teacher, editor, explorer, and consul, he has known many men and many lands; but his heart seems still with the "lion's whelp," the city that, with its "jungle growth of spire and mast," its fog-robed greed, and sneer, and pride, waits for the coming of culture and of art after "the repose of years." Like a genuine American, he has, in literature, tried almost everything; and that he has never absolutely failed is a tribute to an energy that seems to have been nourished, like that of Winthrop and Thoreau, by much living in the open air: mountain breezes and salt sea spray give a freshness and verve to his pages. Save in a few poor criticisms and rhymes, he writes like a strong man rejoicing in his strength, and, as is the fashion of such, tender to weakness, fierce to fraud. He has attempted far too much, and is prone, especially in his later works, to repeat himself. He should avoid blurring

over his best creations with the sponge of satiety: a fine picture wants a good part of the wall: the Dresden Madonna itself would suffer by having the room crowded with replicas. Mr. Harte is in danger of making the frames of his Salvator Rosas overlap one another. He is a humorist of the lower as well as of the higher type. Artistically—I do not speak of actual date—his "'prentice han'" appears in parody. His *Sensation Novels Condensed*—especially the burlesques of Miss Braddon, Victor Hugo, Michelet, Dickens, Miss Brontë, and Wilkie Collins—cannot be read without laughter; but their style is anticipated by Thackeray, Browne, and *Punch*. The travesties in verse, in the same volume, are open to the same cavil. That on Edgar Poe is amusing but slight; the same is true of *A Geological Madrigal*,[1] which ends with one of the author's not unfrequent unscannable lines. *Mrs. Judge Jenkins* is more objectionable; however sound the moral, there was no need to grin through a horse collar at Mr. Whittier's idyll, in order to prevent Mr. Harte's countrymen from making romantic and unsuitable marriages. He would not represent contemporary America, as he does, without falling into frequent violations of good taste: when books are expurgated, as they ought to be, not to conciliate prudes, but to maintain an artistic standard, these "blacks" should be brushed away from our author's pages. To a higher "form" belong the burlesques, not of books, but of life, which first brought him into European favour. Writers—especially in verse—are often persecuted by the popularity of some hit, which at first has made, and then threatens almost to mar, them. I am mistaken if Mr. Harte has not wished to hang *That Heathen Chinee*, and give the lie to *Truthful James*, and wring the neck of *The Emeu*, and "cave in the heads" of the whole *Society on the Stanis-*

[1] Which, by the way, is not, as the title bears, "after Herrick" at all; but a close echo of the best-known passage in Shenstone.

laus. They are funny: their local flavour and seeming veracity make them humorous; but they are on his lower level, and must be perpetually trying to drag him down to it. They have, however, been born; and, unlike human beings, are armed against Colt or Bowie, halter or stake. Frankenstein was not more a victim to his misbegotten fiend than some authors are to their successful jokes. Ask of a child, Who was Southey? and it will answer, He wrote *The Cataract of Lodore;* of an illiterate person, Who is Bret Harte?—*The Heathen Chinee.* Belonging to the same class, among the author's verses, is the imaginary incident of the war, called *The Aged Stranger,* the point of which, as is generally the case with western wit, turns on the surprise at the close. Among his other burlesques worth mentioning are *The Aspiring Miss Delaine,* a satire on chemistry and over-dress; *The White Pine Ballad;* the *Songs without Sense; Dolly Varden;* and *A Moral Vindicator;* the last of which should warm the heart of Mr. Clemens, who desires to apply the Lynch legislature of Arkansas to our metropolis. Mr. Harte's serious poems are, generally, above par, and almost always vigorous; some are rough, but occasionally pathetic, lyrics of pioneer life; or narratives in miniature, often striking by their conciseness and quaint realism, but rugged in form, and sometimes defaced by an affectation of abruptness that amounts to obscurity. Such are *Jim, Dow's Flat, In the Tunnel, Penelope, After the Accident,* which, of various finish, have the effect of crayon sketches, on the spot, drawn by a firm hand. His more polished pieces in verse are, unlike his prose, apt, in their manner if not in their matter, to be reflections of elder poets. *The Angelus,* beginning—

> "Bells of the past, whose long-forgotten music
> Still fills the wide expanse,
> Tinging the sober twilight of the present
> With colour of romance,"

with the *Lines on a Pen of Thomas Starr King, Dickens in*

Camp, and others, are manifest, though sometimes musical, variations of Longfellow. *Her Letter* might have been written by Locker, or Praed, or Owen Meredith, across the sea. The pathos of the reply to the last is, unfortunately, infected by the persistent slang of "Truthful James." Among the fugitive pieces that attest the writer's keen eye and frequent pensive moods, and entitle him to be ranked among minor poets, we may instance the following, *To a Seabird*, dated Santa Cruz, 1869 :—

"Sauntering hither on listless wings,
Careless vagabond of the sea,
Little thou heedest the surf that sings,
The bar that thunders, the shale that rings—
Give me to keep thy company.

"Little thou hast, old friend, that's new,
Storms and wrecks are old things to thee;
Sick am I of these changes too;
Little to care for, little to rue,
I on the shore and thou on the sea.

"All of thy wanderings, far and near,
Bring thee at last to shore and me;
All of my journeyings end them here,
This our tether must be our cheer,—
I on the shore and thou on the sea.

"Lazily rocking on ocean's breast,
Something in common, old friend, have we,
Thou on the shingle seekest thy nest,
I to the waters look for rest—
I on the shore and thou on the sea."

But verse, though it may be, Mr. Harte's "cheer," is, on the whole, his "tether." His mocking-bird melodies may pass with his burlesques. He is most of a humorist, in the high sense, where he is furthest from a jester,—in the prose idylls of the wild life which he has done more than any one else to make poetical. In a preface to an edition of 1869, he takes an accurate measure of his *rôle*.

"I cannot claim any higher motive than to illustrate an era of which Californian history has preserved the incidents more often than the character of the actors—yet an era, replete with a certain heroic Greek poetry, of which perhaps none were more unconscious than the heroes themselves. And I shall be quite content to have collected here merely the materials for the *Iliad* that is yet to be sung."

Mr. Harte's genius has nothing epical about it. He, in general, wisely limits himself to a single act, often to a single scene of a drama. He has not been successful with any elaborate novel or complete romance. Some of his shortest pieces, apparently rough though really careful studies, are among his best. He lifts his curtain, often the mere blanket of a tent, on his troop of strolling players, and exhibits them in a *pose plastique*. His sketches of wild life stand in somewhat the same relation to the pioneers of the West that our Border ballads do to the brave thieves and handsome freebooters, passionate maids and mourning widows, of Liddesdale and Galloway in the sixteenth century. In passing from the one to the other, we have to change scenes and names—the Missouri for the Tweed; the Rocky Mountains for the Cheviots; a brace of saddlebags, stored with nuggets, for a bushel of corn; a bar-room, full of smoke and curses for a robber's "keep;" Kerges, Tryans, Rattlers, and Dodds for Johnnie Armstrongs, Jamie Telfers, and Kinmont Willies; stirring or pathetic prose for verse. In both we have the same broad features, rude love and hate, revenge, ferocity, and a prevailing atmosphere of lawlessness, redeemed by like exhibitions of gratitude or magnanimity. Both deal with the elemental qualities of human nature, displayed without reserve, chiaroscuro or background, in a half-savage age or clime. Both have the same intense realism: they do not seem to be fictions. Above all, they are inspired by the charity that believes, and succeeds, at least for the time, in making us believe, that there is something in the worst rebels, waifs and strays, in "the biggest scamp," the greatest drunkard, the most

reckless gambler—in the men, and women too, "of no account"—that brings them within the pale of our sympathies. Great writers may be divided into two classes; the stern moralists, as Dante, Spenser and Milton, who, branding or trampling on vice, and crowning virtue on a crag, draw a hard and fast line between the sheep and the goats, the redeemed and the damned; and the great humanists, like Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Burns, who have a fellow-feeling for their Wives of Bath, Falstaffs, and Jolly Beggars. Mr. Harte is not a great writer; but the generosity, for which his work makes us give him credit, leans, occasionally perhaps over-leans, to the side of clemency. Like Burns, he has almost a weakness for blackguards, and "finds much matter" in those who have been subject to the world's outlawry. Good, —not so much, as in Hawthorne, out of evil,—but side by side with, or underlying evil, is his ethical text. His Art is shown in his never preaching on it; but making its truth appear, and by his portraits and situations—in which actual experiences seem to be merely dyed in the colours of fancy— —compelling us to feel it. He has, here and there, overridden this notion: in company with many of his characters, a prudent man would look well to his purse, his watch, and his revolver; but, in an age when respectability is so rampant that, in some of our social circles, to say anything other than a platitude is to incur the suspicion of incendiarism or insanity,—when so many moral fortunes are wrecked by a refusal of salvage,—the indirect appeals of this Howard of unimprisoned convicts are worth a volume of glib discourse on "the exceeding sinfulness of sin."

Our author's works are so fresh to our hands that it is scarce necessary to particularise them. No higher praise need be given to *The Luck of Roaring Camp*, the early corner-stone of his higher reputation, than that it may rank with *Rosamund Grey* or *Rab and his Friends*. Equally

pathetic is *The Outcasts of Poker Flat*, driven by the Lynch law of their wild quarters, to starve by inches amid the encircling and eddying wreaths. The self-sacrifice of their leader, Oakhurst, is the most dramatic incident; but the picture of the two dead women is drawn with the finest touch :—

"Toward morning they found themselves unable to feed the fire, which gradually died away. As the embers slowly blackened, the Duchess crept closer to Piney and broke the silence of many hours. 'Piney, can you pray?' 'No, dear,' said Piney simply. The Duchess, without knowing exactly why, felt relieved, and, putting her head upon Piney's shoulder, spoke no more. And, so reclining, the younger and purer pillowing the head of her soiled sister upon her virgin breast, they fell asleep. The wind lulled, as if it feared to waken them. Feathery drifts of snow, shaken from the long pine boughs, flew like white-winged birds, and settled about them as they slept. The moon, through the rifted clouds, looked down upon what had been the camp. But all human stain, all trace of earthly travail, was hidden beneath the spotless mantle mercifully flung from above. They slept all that day and the next, nor did they waken when voices and footsteps broke the silence. . . . And when pitying fingers brushed the snow from their wan faces, you could scarcely have told, from the equal peace that dwelt upon them, which was she that had sinned."

Miggles is a quainter tune on the same theme, the existence of self-devotion outside the bounds of altogether reputable society. The heroine is a girl, very unconventional, who, after some town experience, has retired to the country, mainly with the view of tending an old friend who has become paralytic. With a tame bear for guardian, she devotes her life the man who is neither her father, brother, nor husband, but simply "helpless Jim." Their hut is sometimes a shelter for storm-staid travellers, a party of whom arrive and share her hospitality. One of these asks her about the person she calls "her baby," whom she is nursing and trying to amuse, bringing him flowers, and reading to him from scraps of books and newspapers, plastered all about the dingy wall of the little room :—

"'Why,' asked the Judge, 'do you not marry this man to whom you have devoted your youthful life?'

"'Well, you see,' said Miggles, 'it would be playing it rather low down on Jim, to take advantage of his being so helpless. And then, too, if we were man and wife, now, we'd both know that I was *bound* to do what I do now of my own accord.'

"'But you are young yet and attractive——'

"'It's getting late,' said Miggles gravely, 'and you'd better all turn in. Good-night, boys;' and, throwing the blanket over her head, Miggles laid herself down beside Jim's chair, her head pillowed on the low stool that held his feet, and spoke no more. The fire slowly faded from the hearth; we each sought our blankets in silence; and presently there was no sound in the long room but the pattering of the rain upon the roof, and the heavy breathing of the sleepers.

"It was nearly morning when I awoke from a troubled dream. The storm had passed, the stars were shining, and through the shutterless window the full moon, lifting itself over the solemn pines without, looked into the room. It touched the lonely figure in the chair with an infinite compassion, and seemed to baptise with a shining flood the lowly head of the woman whose hair, as in the sweet old story, bathed the feet of him she loved.

In *Tennessee's Partner*, we have an equally vivid picture of the fidelity, renunciation, and "honour among thieves," which is the refrain of so much of the author's work. Tennessee perpetrates a more than usually audacious robbery, and, being arrested by a man better armed than himself, is tried, by the rude justice of Red Dog and Sandy Bar, condemned under the shade of "the Sierra, etched on the dark firmament, crowned with passionless stars," and incontinently hanged. His partner, innocent but sympathetic, leads his funeral through Grizzly Cañon, till the procession comes to a place where the broken soil, about an open grave, is mistaken for a recent attempt at cultivation—

"The cart was halted before the enclosure; and rejecting the offers of assistance with the same air of simple self-reliance he had displayed throughout, Tennessee's Partner lifted the rough coffin on his back, and deposited it unaided, within the shallow grave. He then nailed down the board which served as a lid; and mounting the little mound of earth beside it, took off his hat, and slowly mopped his face with his handkerchief. This the crowd felt was a preliminary to speech; and

they disposed themselves variously on stumps and boulders, and sat expectant.

"'When a man,' began Tennessee's Partner, slowly, 'has been running free all day, what's the natural thing for him to do! Why, to come home. And if he ain't in a condition to go home, what can his best friend do? Why, bring him home! And here's Tennessee has been running free, and we brings him home from his wandering.' He paused, and picked up a fragment of quartz, rubbed it thoughtfully on his sleeve, and went on: 'It ain't the first time that I've packed him on my back as you see'd me now. It ain't the first time that I brought him to this yer cabin when he couldn't help himself; it ain't the first time that I and "Jenny" have waited for him on yon hill, and picked him up, and so fetched him home, when he couldn't speak, and didn't know me. And now that it's the last time, why——' he paused, and rubbed the quartz gently on his sleeve—'you see it's sort of rough on his pardner. And now, gentlemen,' he added, abruptly, and picking up his long-handled shovel, 'the fun'ls over; and my thanks and Tennessee's thanks to you for your trouble.'"

"From that day his rude health and great strength seemed visibly to decline; and when the rainy season fairly set in, and the tiny grass blades were beginning to peep from the rocky mound above Tennessee's grave, he took to his bed. One night when the pines in the cabin were swaying in the storm . . . he lifted his head from his pillow, saying, 'It is time to go for Tennessee; I must put "Jenny" in the cart:' and would have risen . . . struggling, he still pursued his singular fancy, 'There now, steady "Jenny."' . . . How dark it is! Look out for the ruts—and look out for him too, old gal. Sometimes, you know, when he's blind drunk, he drops down right in the trail. Keep on straight up to the pine on the top of the hill. Thar—I told you so!—thar he is—coming this way, too—all by himself, sober, and his face a-shining. Tennessee! Pardner!' And so they met."

The Idyll of Red Gulch, High Water Mark, and the episode of the vehement but genuine *Mliss* (who is ready with poison, revolver, or daggers to escape her persecutors, but at last goes calmly away to the shelter of her beloved master) are all in the same spirit,—that of the man who quarrelled with his employers at Sonora, and went out to seek his fortune afresh, because he would not refrain from denouncing a savage crusade against the Indians.

Some of his later pieces have more action. *Jeff Briggs' Love Story* is not a dissolving view, isolated anecdote, or half-

humorous, half-pathetic scrawl: it is a narrative of adventure and devotion, where we are equally interested in the fortunes of the hero (one of his types of sturdy manhood emerging from the shadows of the past), and in the heroine. The author's women are redeemed from utter debasement by some trait of maternity, sisterhood, or other softening link: his best, pirouette on the border-line of wild life and the refinements of civilisation. They are more akin to Madge Danver in *Garth* than to the somewhat starched models of Mr. James; and their freaks are less repellant than the severe self-consciousness of the latter. "Modesty in a young girl has," he parenthetically remarks, "a comfortable, satisfying charm, recognised easily by all humanity; but he must be a sorry knave or a worse prig, who is not deliciously thrilled when Modesty puts her charming little foot just over the threshold of Propriety." This Miss Mayfield[1] is always doing; though in her lover's presence she puts her hand for security into her pocket, she is quite in character in the final fraud, which is to the higher Comedy as Desdemona's lie to Tragedy. The dead gambler's brave son is equally blessed in his wife, and his servant "Yuba Bill."

Once only, and with a most successful result, Mr. Harte has left his usual beat, and given us, in his *Thankful Blossom*, a pleasant glimpse of New Jersey in the Revolution days. There is more variety of motive in this piece than he often exhibits, even a trace of the obscurity of which we have sometimes to complain; it owes its attraction to its peculiar combination of subtilty and quaintness. The opening scene of the Tryst is excellent — the lane, the horse and rider, the trees, and the breaking icicles, are brought more clearly before us than they could be on canvas: and we do not forget the touches of humour—as the lowing and the

[1] *Flip*, a recent idyll abounding in beautiful descriptions, but with a scarce intelligible ending, has a rougher but similar type.

girl's laugh, her answer to the assertion all men are born free and equal, "No, sir, not even the cows," and the selfish, treacherous fellow's embrace, careful of his pockets stuffed with eggs and marmalade. The heroine escapes, being a virago, by her outspoken affections and her ultimate recognition of her superiors. She engages us because she is intrepid without being conceited, a bright countryside beauty who never boasts. She can lead, but in season can follow; and armed with quick wit, a sharp tongue, and, as appears, with a heavy hand, knows when to listen and obey. The "honest, earnest, grave eyes" that said, "I am truthful, be frank with me," appeal to us from the page, as they appealed to Major Van Zandt (the beau-ideal of a western chevalier) for forgiveness, kneeling beside him among the flowers, "a most premature little blossom," "a Tory Jade," despite her riding-whip and her fibs, among the "things worth stooping for." The episode of Brewster's escape and Van Zandt's crushing answer to the girl's confession, is a fine vignette to Lovelace—

> "I could not love thee, dear, so much,
> Loved I not honour more."

The most graphic part of the story, however, is where the scene shifts to the headquarters of the Commander, whose great figure, with those of Hamilton, the stately brocaded wife, the sympathetic Miss Schuyler, are drawn with real historic power. Every trait of manner, the grace with the unflinching will, the courteous hand and watchful eye, are in accordance with what we read, in graver records, of the George who was so much a king, that "George of England ruling by accident, impiously known as the grace of God, could find no other way of resisting his power than by calling him Mr. Washington." The incidents of the Gray Surtout, the watch-word, and the repartees of the ladies, relieve the severity of the situation. In Thankful's retort, "Jealousy may belong to

the wife of a patriot as well as a traitor," and elsewhere, we have indications of the fact that "Mr. Washington" had his soft side, and was no more than the Arthur of legend, the *βασιλεύς ἀμύμων* of modern fancy. We do not gather the impression that the narrator—who is certainly never a prig, but frequently a Bohemian—cherishes on this account less affectionate memories of the Father of his country.

At the commencement of this somewhat protracted survey I dwelt on some of the obstacles with which the Literature of every young country, and in particular that of America, has had to contend, and trust not to be accused of patronage, if I refer, in conclusion, to some of its most conspicuous advantages. Foremost among its most attractive features is its freshness, its freedom from restraint, the courage with which the best Transatlantic writers address themselves to the discussion of questions, and set before their readers problems, apt among more timid or wearied people, to be tabooed, or laid languidly to rest. The Authority which is the guide of old nations constantly threatens to become tyrannical: they wear their traditions like a chain; and, in the canonisation of laws of taste, the creative powers are depressed. In England we write under fixed conditions, with the fear of critics before our eyes: we are all bound to cast our ideas into similar moulds, and the name of "free-thinker" has grown into a term of reproach. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress* is perhaps the last English book written without a thought of being reviewed. There is a gain in the habit of self-restraint fostered by this state of things; but there is a loss in the consequent lack of spontaneity; and we may learn something from a literature which is ever ready for adventures. In America the love of uniformity gives place to impetuous impulses; the most extreme sentiments are made audible, the most noxious have their day; and, truth being left to vindicate itself, the overthrow of

error, though more gradual, may at last prove more conclusive. A New England poet can write with confidence of his country as the land

> "Where no one suffers loss, or bleeds
> For thoughts that men call heresies." [1]

Another feature of American literature is its comprehensiveness: what it has lost in depth it has gained in breadth. Addressing a vast audience, it appeals to universal sympathies. In the Northern States, where comparatively few have leisure to write well, almost every man, woman, and child can read, and does read. It has been remarked that "the character of a people depends more on what they read than what they write," and that the Americans are the greatest literary "consumers" in the world, supplying ten students of Tennyson, Thackeray, Bulwer, Longfellow, Hawthorne, Lowell, Mill, Buckle, Herbert Spencer, etc., to one in England. Books are to be found in every log-hut, and public questions are discussed by every scavenger. During the war, when the Lowell factory girls were writing verses, the *Biglow Papers* were being recited in every smithy. The consequence is that (setting aside the newspapers) there is little that is sectional in the popular religion or literature: it exalts and despises no class, and almost wholly ignores the lines that in other countries divide the upper ten thousand and the lower ten million. Where manners make men, the people are proud of their peerage, but they blush for their boors. In the New World there are no "Grand Seigneurs," and no human vegetables; and if there are fewer giants there are also fewer mannikins. American poets recognise no essential distinction between the "Village Blacksmith" and

[1] The great national institutions are all unsectarian. We have, however, to regret the growing habit of endowing private Colleges where restrictions of creed are imposed on the teachers—restrictions as narrow and intolerant as any in Europe or Asia.

" the caste of Vere de Vere." Burns speaks for the one ; Byron and Tennyson for the other ; Longfellow, to the extent of his genius, for both. The same spirit which glorifies labour denounces every form of despotism but that of the multitude. American slavery, being an anachronism based on antipathies of race, was worse than Athenian slavery. But there is no song of an Athenian slave. When the ancients were unjust to their inferiors, they were so without moral disquietude : the lie had got into the soul. Christianity, which substituted the word " brother " for " barbarian," first gave meaning to the word " humanity." But the Feudalism of the Middle Ages long contended successfully against the higher precepts of the Church : the teaching of Froissart held its ground against that of Langland. The hero-worship of our greatest recent prose author is apt to degenerate into a reassertion of the feudal spirit. The aspirations of our descendants in the West point, on the other hand, to a Freedom which is in danger of being corrupted by License. This danger is critically increased at the present hour by the anarchy apt to ensue on the vacating of so many intellectual thrones. He who but the other day sat on perhaps the highest, tells us that " when the half gods go the gods arrive." Let us trust that in his country the reverse of the sentence may never be verified ; that the vulgarism of demagogic excess, in particular the corrupting love of buffoonery, may be restrained and overcome by the good taste and culture of her nobler minds, and that we may anticipate for her Literature under the mellowing influences of time, an expansive future.

ADDENDUM.

RECENT CRITICS, NOVELISTS, AND MINOR POETS.

CRITICISM on criticism, with comments thereon, multiplied in a geometrical ratio, is apt to result in bewilderment; as the inspection of Chinese boxes within boxes, or German parentheses within parentheses. It must suffice to remark,—in addition to what we have said of Emerson, Holmes, and Lowell,—that American critics of the last thirty years have one advantage; their work is in a lesser degree than ours forestalled: with inferior art they have more nature. As a rule, they seem to think less of themselves, more of their authors, whom they are apt to attack or praise with more hearty directness. Their ill-will vents itself, not in treacherous innuendo or skilful garbling (*e.g.* in selecting the worst lines in a volume and patronising them as the best), but in comparatively harmless downright abuse. Their higher critics are generally prone to the amiable weakness of excessive or indiscriminate admiration. Mr. Griswold, though, (as Mr. Ingram convinces us) capable of malignity, fails to convey a very distinct impression of the majority of his authors; because he treats them too much like a showman, who has difficulty in finding adjectives to distinguish the occupant of one cage from another. The special points of his eulogy are sometimes unhappily selected. When, for instance, he informs us that Mr. E. P. Whipple's writings

"combine the strength of the *Areopagitica*[1] with the liveliness of *The Spectator*," the reader is inclined to look to those writings in the first place as almost unique models of style. Mr. Whipple is not without conspicuous merits. He gives one the impression that he conscientiously reads the books he criticises. His information is extensive; his judgments—unless when distorted by the patriotic zeal that compares Robert Treat Paine's *Adams and Liberty* to the *Mariners of England*, and Cooper to Wordsworth, and Halleck to Thackeray—are sound; his historical views (save for the Puritanic taint that makes him cavil at Gibbon) are comprehensive; his remarks on character are here and there acute. I have referred to his just estimates of Prescott and Motley; the following is in substance equally correct:—

"Probably no statesman that the country has produced has exceeded Sumner in his passion for rectitude. In every matter that came up for discussion he vehemently put the question, "Which of the two sides is Right?" He so persistently capitalised this tremendous monosyllable and poured into its utterance such an amount of moral fervour or moral wrath that the modest word, which everybody used without much regard to its meaning, blazed out in his rhetoric, not as a feeble and faded truism, but as a dazzling and smiting truth."

But this extract is enough to show that Mr. Whipple's style is defective; and though it may be, as he informs us, "a secondary consideration," it is what he has been commended for by his injudicious friends. I shall adduce a few instances, taken almost at random from his review of American Literature, where the words are misused, the manner is loud, and the illustrations doubtful:—

"Mrs. Howe's hymn has not this elemental character, but it is

[1] The surprise I ventured to express seven years ago in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* at this remark, was the only provocation I could find for a leading article in the London "Spectator," in which the writer was pleased to observe that my humble review, everywhere else received at least with courtesy, was a discredit to a respectable publication. Having referred to this amusing tirade in pp. 85, 86, I seem called on here to explain the reference.

still wonderfully animating and invigorating; and the constant use of Scripture phrases shows the high level of thought and sentiment to which her soul had mounted, and from which she poured forth her exulting strains." "Dana remains one of the *prominences* of our literature." "Longfellow's noble poems have found a *lodgment* in the mind of everybody." "Mrs. Osgood did not appear to feel the fetters of rhyme; she *danced* in them." "Howells *adds one or two thousand per cent* to the value of his raw material by his incomparable way of working it up." "Holmes' strength of individuality . . . is felt . . . in the pleasant way in which he stretches a coxcomb on the rack of wit, as in the energy with which he grapples an opponent in the tussle of argumentation."

Of the same author the critic elsewhere writes: "He kills with a sly stab, and proceeds on his way as if nothing in particular had happened. He *picks his teeth* with cool unconcern." But we appreciate Mr. Whipple's modesty when he admits that "the literature of America is but an insufficient measure of the realised capacities of the human mind," and whispers in our ear that "J. G. Percival is recognised as a poet of the first American class."

Mr. Moncure D. Conway has a special claim on our regard from his residence in England, and his appreciative criticisms of some of our leading authors, especially of Carlyle. As a theologian and lay preacher, he goes beyond Theodore Parker in dispensing, not only with traditions, but with some of the beliefs ordinarily accepted as fundamental. He is, since Thoreau's death, the most eminent and loyal of the followers of Emerson, to whose genius and character he has devoted many eloquent pages of affectionate memory.

The subtlest critic of the last thirty years in America is Delia Bacon, who—devoting her life to the establishment of the thesis that Lord Bacon and Sir Walter Raleigh were the joint authors of the plays attributed to Shakespeare—has, amid a mass of confused infatuations, occasionally thrown a finer light on passages of those plays than any English writer since Coleridge. No one, as Nathaniel Hawthorne asserts, has cast a more beautiful wreath on the tomb of the world's

"playwright" than the half insane woman of genius who almost denied his existence.

Among other contributors to the contemporary criticism of the West, perhaps the first place is claimed by George W. Curtis, to whom we have already referred as the author of *Nile Notes of a Howadji*, and as the biographer of Winthrop. His *Potiphar Papers*, and those which bear the stamp of the *Editor's Easy Chair* in "Harper," have been especially commended. Even in this summary we ought to mention—the accomplished publisher, J. T. Fields, whose *Yesterdays with Authors* recount, in an interesting manner, his experiences of several eminent men; Charles F. Adams, who has added another to the numerous restorations of Samuel Johnson; George Ripley, and Mary A. Dodge (known under the pseudonym of Gale Hamilton), newspaper reviewers of distinction; E. C. Stedman, author of an appreciative volume on the *Victorian Poets*, who, from time to time, in "Harper's Magazine," seems disposed, perhaps, rather to overexalt some of our minor writers with whose biographies he is familiar; and R. H. Stoddard, who, in "Scribner's Magazine" (now "The Century"), gives interesting familiar reminiscences of Longfellow and other national poets. These periodicals owe their deserved popularity in part to an incessant series of attractive stories, sketches of town and country, vivid portraits from the stage, and useful lessons in natural history; in equal measure to the beauty of their illustrations, which are sometimes, indeed, apt to eclipse the text, as Mr. Henry Irving's scenery excels his acting.[1]

[1] Since writing the above, my attention has been called to two articles in the last number of "The Century," in which the abuse of "mutual admiration" culminates. I have dwelt on the merits of Mr. W. D. Howells, as a novelist; as a critic he is stultified by excess of patriotism. Some months ago he wrote as if "Mark Twain" were on a level with "Elia:" now he seems to give to Mr. Henry James, jun. (whose article on "Venice" immediately precedes that of his eulogist), the foremost place among the

Among novelists excluded from our text, either because they fall beyond the period assigned to it, or because we have not been able to overtake their works, the following seem to have attained considerable celebrity :—J. W. Forest, author of *Kate Beaumont*, and E. Everett Hale, of *The Man without a Country*, characterised as "fantastically ingenious;" J. G. Holland, for some time editor of Scribner, and T. W. Higginson, the author of *Malbone*,—the two latter both distinguished critics; Edward Eggleston, Adeline Trafton, and Rebecca

romancers of the world. We are told that the almost heartlessly conceited "Isabel" in the almost intolerably analytic *Portrait of a Lady*, is—along with George Eliot's "Dorothea"—"the most nobly imagined and most nobly intentioned" woman "in modern fiction," and that Isabel is "the more subtly divined of the two." We are assured that Mr. James's style, "is, upon the whole, better than that of any other novelist," within the range of a knowledge which must include *The Scarlet Letter*, *Esmond*, and *Villette*, if not George Sand's *Consuelo* or Goethe's *Wahlverwandtschaften*. More strangely, Mr. Howells's desire to exalt his idol leads him to depreciate some of his great English predecessors, in a manner so ridiculous as to evade resentment. "The art of fiction," he confidently asserts, "has, in fact, become a finer art in our day than it was with Dickens and Thackeray. We could not suffer the confidential attitude of the latter, nor the mannerism of the former, any more than we could endure the prolixity of Richardson or the coarseness of Fielding." Similarly, in the last article in the same number, Mr. Charles Dudley Warner is pleased to write :—"We have long ago ceased to be either surprised, grieved, or indignant at anything the English critics say of us. We have recovered our balance. We know that since Gulliver there has been no piece of original humour produced in England equal to "Knickerbocker's New York;" that not in this century has any English writer equalled the wit and satire of the *Biglow Papers*. We used to be irritated at what we called the snobbishness of English critics of a certain school; we are so no longer, for we see that its criticism is only the result of ignorance,—simply of inability to understand. . . . . And, on our part the day has come when we receive their literary efforts with the same respectful desire to be pleased with them, that we have to like their dress or their speech." Ample tribute has been paid to writers of fiction in the West; but this acme of Pogramism in literature tempts us to exclaim with Roderick Dhu, "Soars thy presumption then so high." As the wit of the best American humorists is a shadow to the genius of *Chuzzlewit;* so all their living novelists, working together, might despair to approach *The Newcomes;* and, despite the superfine squeamishness of New England, *Tom Jones* is likely to survive *Roderick Hudson*, and *Daisy Miller* to predecease *Clarissa Harlowe*.

Harding Davis; Charles Dudley Warner, whose *Back-log Studies* have been compared to the prose idyls of Bret Harte; Frank R. Stockton, who, in his country sketches, *Rudder Grange* and *Pomona*, displays a vein of true and characteristic humour; Mrs. Elizabeth Stoddard, authoress of *Life in the Iron Mill*, and *Davis Galbraith;* Julian Sturgis, and Mrs. Harriet Prescott Spofford, whose "thrilling stories," according to Mr. Whipple, are written "in a style of perhaps exaggerated splendour, in which prose is flushed with all the hues of poetry;" Edgar Faucett's *Gentleman of Leisure*, and *The Confessions of a Frivolous Girl*, by Robert Grant. "George Fleming," the authoress of *A Nile Novel*, has since written *The Head of Medusa* and *Mirage;* while the younger Hawthorne, Howells, and James, are running together their somewhat headlong race.[1]

To American historians we have to add Dr. J. W. Draper, whose *History of the Intellectual Development of Europe* is said in some respects to bear comparison with the work of Mr. Buckle. As writers in verse, mention should also be made of:—T. W. Parsons, author of some celebrated lines on the bust of Dante, and an admired translation of the *Inferno;* Theodore Tilton; William Winter; R. W. Gilder; Charles Dekay; Hiram Rich; James Freeman Clarke, and William S. Shurtleff.

It has been unchivalrously remarked that, if Pharaoh had been timeously visited by the plague of American poetesses, the firstborn might have been spared. While registering a protest against the cynicism, we must admit that, in the course of one life, it were impossible to do justice to all these ladies, and we must be content to close our list with a tribute, of imperfect knowledge but implicit belief, to the following illustrious names: Mrs. S. M. B. Pratt; Louise Chandler

[1] For reference to the recent political novel entitled *Democracy*, see note "On Corruption."

Moulton; Nora Percy; Lucy Larcom; Susan Coolidge (Miss Woolsey); Mrs. M. J. Preston; Alice Welling Rollins; Charlotte Fiske Bates; Mary Mapes Dodge; Helen Mackay Hutchinson; Mary Clemmer; Owen Insley; Ella Dietz; Emma Lazarus; Virginia Vaughan; Ada Isaacs Menken; Lydia Maria Child, and Mrs. Zadel Barnes Gustapon.

NOTES.

NOTE A.—ON THE CONSTITUTION.

THE leading features of the British Constitution form part of the Common-School Education of New England, but we are not so generally instructed in that of the United States. For the sake of some of my readers, I may therefore be excused for recalling the following facts elementary to the understanding of the controversial and historical literature of America :—

The "ARTICLES OF CONFEDERATION and Perpetual Union," "done at Philadelphia" in the year 1778, establish little more than a strict offensive and defensive alliance between States whose "sovereignty" is guaranteed. The exclusive right of "the United States in Congress assembled" to the control of foreign relations, and the settlement of disputes between the contracting parties, is carefully guarded; but only an assembly of delegates is instituted, no mention is made of a President, nor is there any reference to a central Judiciary. In the CONSTITUTION of 1788, on the other hand, the phrase "sovereignty" drops out; by Article II., the powers and mode of election (see Note 2) of the EXECUTIVE chief, and by Article III. those of the JUDICATURE of the Supreme Court are defined. A few extracts from Article I. on the LEGISLATURE will convey a clear conception of its design and principal functions.

§ 1. "All legislative powers herein granted shall be vested in a CONGRESS of the United States, which shall consist of a Senate and House of Representatives.

§ 2. "The HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES shall be composed of members, chosen every second year by the people"—*i.e.* with limitations, varying according to local law, every adult male citizen—"of the several States. . . . . .

"The number of Representatives shall not exceed one for every thirty thousand, but each State shall have at least one Representative." (Accordingly at starting Rhode Island had 1, Virginia 10, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania 8 each, and New York 6.)

"The House of Representatives shall choose their Speaker and other officers; and shall have the sole power of impeachment.

§ 3. "The SENATE of the United States shall be composed of two

Senators from each State, chosen by the legislature thereof for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. . . .

"The Vice-President of the United States shall be President of the Senate, but shall have no vote, unless they be equally divided. The Senate shall have sole power to try all impeachments.

§ 5. "Each House may . . . with the concurrence of two-thirds, expel a member.

§ 6. "The Senators and Representatives shall receive a compensation for their services, to be . . . paid out of the treasury."

The minimum age of Representatives is fixed at 25, of Senators at 30 years, with a term of citizenship in the one case of seven, in the other of nine, years; and provision is made for the rotation of the latter by the creation, in the first place, of three classes—one elected for two, another for four, a third for six years. The remainder of the Article is mainly devoted to conferring powers on Congress to collect the taxes, regulate the custom duties, currency, posts, and great highways of the Union, and to exercise an absolute control over all questions of peace and war, the separate States being forbidden from entering into "any treaty, alliance, or confederation." In some of the subsequent Amendments certain further privileges are guaranteed to them, as the maintenance of a militia, freedom of speech, of the press and of religion; but Congress reserves to itself exclusively the adjustment of all international matters, or those in dispute between the different States or any members of one as against another. All charges of treason against the Union fall to be decided by the judges of the Supreme Court, who are to "hold their offices during good behaviour"—*i.e.* practically for the period of their efficiency. But there is no provision for retiring allowances, and the conferring of any title of nobility in the Union is expressly prohibited. The whole of this momentous document bears the stamp of, what it was, a compromise between principles still contending. All the leaders of the Revolution agreed in their desire to separate America from England; but Hamilton and his party, having strong sympathies with the British Constitution, desired, as nearly as possible, to reproduce it across the Atlantic; while his opponents were bent on organising a society on the basis of equal rights; the one set wished to preserve the aristocratic element in a new form: the other leant towards unrestricted Democracy. The same adjustment of the Balance of Political Power appears in the alternate concessions to unity and to variety, to the claims of the several States, and to the authority of the central Government. The problem being to convert a multifarious aggregate into a nation, the theory of a Double Chamber was applied to solve it. The House of Representatives, resting on aggregate population, and the most populous States being generally the longest settled, is (contrary to what might have been expected from the somewhat inferior dignity of its members) the stronghold of American Conservatism: while the Senate, in which Colorado has an equal voice with Massachusetts, or Nevada with New York, is the exponent of the

decentralising tendency, the desire for the extension of territory and State Rights. Taking into consideration the influence of the Executive, the result of the whole system is that legislative action is impossible, in America, unless a majority of the People concurs with a majority of the States. But in times of crises, in spite of all guards and checks, a struggle between the parties, which originally effected the compromise, is ever and anon renewed. The question as to their relative wisdom has not yet been decided. J. P. Nichol holds the prevalent triumphs of the Democracy to have been for the interests of civilisation. He writes: "Jefferson, single-handed, met the Federalists—the most intelligent and cultivated men of his time—and destroyed them, because they longed for exotics, fought against the tide, and forgot Lord Bacon's maxim that institutions often outgrow their usefulness. . . . The form of a country's Government depends as much on the emotions as on the intellectual powers at work in social life, which is largely under the control of habits. . . . This life is among the Americans fundamentally industrial. Their mission has been to cover with hives of active homesteads the shelter of intelligent beings, the prairie where wolves and bears divided their empire with a few scattered Indians. . . . Ohio, seventy years ago an untamed forest, where the judges carried their provisions and slept at night in the woods, has now a population equalling that of Scotland, and boasts of twenty colleges. On the basis of this kind of progress, there could be no footing for any form of Feudalism or even for Monarchy. The Government must rest on the principle of Equality: but, with the growth of a system of Jurisprudence to which some of the most accomplished jurists of any age have, now for generations, devoted their best energies, a great fabric is being reared, on the reconciliation of ample freedom with respect for authority. . . . The foundations of a Republic in a country whose climate ranges over 50 degrees of latitude, a theatre open to first comers from every clime and of every origin—throngs attracted by the promise of a larger law than that they left—must at first have exhibited a want of unity, and a composite spirit. . . . The problem, to bind so many jarring elements into a State, to condense the heterogeneous, can only be solved by remembering that the height of the pyramid depends on the breadth and its base, . . . and giving ample scope for variety in the local option allowed in all municipal affairs to the State Governments, in which the living spring of the body politic resides. . . . But the central authority of the United States is more compact than that of other Federations, generally held together by some external fear. It has a Legislature with power to declare the spirit of the constitution, a justly celebrated Judicial organisation, and an Executive, having at its command the military force. It is therefore a great mistake to suppose that it is weak.[1] The limitation of its functions is necessarily proportioned to the extent of the Federation, but it regulates commerce and expenditure,

[1] Mr. Trollope remarks that Americans suffer or submit to more from their Government than Englishmen would endure.

has charge of diplomacy, holds in its grasp the sinews of peace and war, and in every conflict in either sphere, has always triumphed. . . . The danger of America rather lies in a possible over extension of the central authority, and the safeguard against this is only to be found in the firm resistance of minorities. . . . The enterprise of the new civilisation is environed with doubts and menaced by many perils. The strongest river cannot flow on without reverses. In this tangled nature of ours Vices and Virtues are twins: on the great threshing-floor of the world the chaff and the wheat are mingled. No constitutional checks can prevent selfishness, and the conquest of the unknown engenders an excessive spirit of speculation,[1] boasting, and vanity. But as regards the maintenance of order and law, and respect for property, we must remember that the wilder communities represent all races, and societies in all stages of development. Social life has not yet taken possession of the continent; it is only being spread over it. The pioneers in settlements touching on the wilderness, the home of hardship, of peril, and of chance, must be impatient of restraint and reckless of decorum. Daring in excess is not compatible with sedateness. If the desert is to be reclaimed at all it must be by men nearly in a state of nature. Nevertheless American Progress is less stained by crime than that of any other nation in a similar state or stage. The disorders of free governments cannot be concealed, and the rowdyism of the far South or the rude Western press flaunts the violence corresponding to the tyranny whose worst acts are, except for prying historians, buried in the archives of the Inquisition or the records of the Star Chamber." I quote this, as appears to me, somewhat rose-coloured view of an observer of 1848, as representing the more favourable aspects of American politics; but the worst features of the new society are not to be found in the rowdyism of the West.

NOTE B.—PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. TERM OF OFFICE AND VETO POWER.

THE following extracts from the admirable *Exposition of the Constitution* by Judge Story, convey a clear idea of the designs of its framers with regard to the position and prerogatives of the Head of the Executive, and the extent to which they are in danger of being frustrated. I quote from Harper's one-volume edition of 1847, pp. 163-6—"The Electors" (selected, it must be understood, with some reservations, by the whole adult male population of each State for the purpose) "shall meet in their respective States and vote by ballot for President and Vice-President, one of whom at least shall not be an inhabitant of the same State with themselves. . . . The person having the greatest number of votes for President shall be President, if such number be a majority of

[1] It has been said that no American doubts he can accomplish anything, but that he would rather make sixpence by a speculation than half-a-crown by ordinary trade.

the whole number of Electors appointed ; and if no person have such majority, then from the persons having the highest numbers, not exceeding three, on the list of those voted for as President, the House of Representatives shall choose immediately, by ballot, the President. But in choosing the President the votes shall be taken by States, the representation of each State having one vote. . . . There is probably no part of the plan of the framers of the Constitution which, practically speaking, has so little realised the expectations of its friends as that which regards the choice of President. They undoubtedly intended that the electors should be left free to make the choice, according to their own judgment, of the relative merits and qualifications of the candidates for this high office ; and that they should be under no pledge to any popular favourite, and should be guided by no sectional influences. In both respects the event has disappointed all these expectations. The Electors are now almost universally pledged to support a particular candidate before they receive their own appointment, and they do little more than register the previous decrees made by public and private meetings of the citizens of their own State. The President is, in no just sense, the unbiassed choice of the people or of the States. He is commonly the representative of a party, not of the Union."

P. 160. "The duration of the term of office of the Executive . . . should be long enough to enable a chief magistrate to carry fairly through a system of government according to the laws, and to stimulate him to personal firmness in the execution of his duties. If the term is very short he will feel very little of the just pride of office, from the precariousness of its tenure. He will act more with regard to immediate and temporary popularity than to permanent fame. His measures will tend more to ensure his own re-election (if he desires it) than to promote the good of his country. He will bestow office on mean dependants or fawning courtiers. . . . On the other hand, the period should not be so long as to impair the proper dependence of the Executive upon the people. . . . His administration should be known to come under the review of the people at short periods."

P. 98. "Every Bill, which shall have passed the House of Representatives and the Senate, shall, before it become law, be presented to the President of the United States. If he approve he shall sign it ; but if not he shall return it, with his objections, to that House in which it shall have originated, who shall enter the objections at large on their journal, and proceed to consider it. If after such reconsideration two-thirds of that House shall agree to pass the Bill, it shall be sent, together with the objections, to the other House, by which it shall likewise be considered ; and if approved by two-thirds of that House, it shall become a law." . . . "The reasons why the President should possess a qualified negative (for an absolute negative would be highly objectionable) are . . . entirely satisfactory. In the first place, there is a natural tendency in the legislative department to intrude upon the rights and to absorb the powers of the other departments of the Govern-

ment. If the Executive did not possess this qualified negative, he might gradually be stripped of all his authority, and become, what the Governors of some of the States now are, a mere pageant and a shadow of magistracy. . . . This power therefore of a qualified negative, being founded on the supposition that he truly represents all the interests and opinions of the Union, introduces a useful element to check any preponderating interest of any section. . . . It does not . . . suspend legislation, but it merely refers the subject back for a more deliberate review. . . . Thus a thorough revision of the measure is guaranteed, and, at the same time, the deliberate wishes of the States and of the people cannot be disobeyed. . . . The negative of the President was undoubtedly designed by the Constitution to be applied only on extraordinary occasions and exigencies ; and if it were to be applied to the common course of legislation it might be fraught with great public mischief."

P. 100. "All the checks which human ingenuity has been able to devise, or at least all which, with reference to our habits, our institutions, and our diversities of local interest, seem practicable to give perfect operation to the machinery" (of the legialative department) "to adjust its movements, to prevent its eccentricities, and to balance its forces ; all these have been introduced with singular skill, ingenuity, and wisdom, into the arrangements. Yet, after all, the fabric may fall, for the work of man is perishable. Nay, it must fall, if there be not that vital spirit in the people which can alone nourish, sustain, and direct all its movements. If ever the day shall arrive in which the best talents and the best virtues shall be driven from office by intrigue or corruption, by the denunciations of the press, or by the persecutions of party factions, legislation will cease to be national. It will be wise by accident, and bad by system."

Note C.—corruption and "democracy."

It has been said truly that the dangers that have, since their establishment, threatened the United States have been more from within than without. These have been mainly the Slave Question ; the reactionary, selfish, and in its extreme measures, suicidal policy of an almost prohibitive Tariff ; and Political Corruption. The first has been, though at a fearful cost, happily settled : the second I leave to the discussion of economical authorities ; but on the third I may say a few words ; for, in antagonism to it, the most popular American work of fiction since *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, the bitter novel of *Democracy*, with similar though slighter protests of other satirists, take for their text the watchword of Political Reform. The theme is, however, an old one : the abuses of patronage, the evil effects of the pecuniary emoluments, noxiously attached to seats in the Legislature of a country where the ambitions of influence and consideration were amply sufficient

spurs, and the almost inevitable degradation of State judges elected by the masses to annually terminable posts, have been made the subjects of invective and warning almost ever since the acceptance of the Constitution. In the address of the second President, John Adams, of March 4, 1797, we have the following: "In the midst of these pleasing ideas we should be unfaithful to ourselves if we should ever lose sight of the danger to our liberties, if anything partial or extraneous should ever infect the purity of our elections. If an election is to be determined by a majority of a single vote, and that can be procured by a party, through artifice or corruption the Government may be the choice of a party for its own ends, not of the nation for the general good." After the lapse of nearly thirty years we find Mr. George M'Duffie opposing, February 1826, from his place in Congress, a proposal to refer the election of the President directly to the people, in these weighty and prophetic terms: "From the commercial spirit of modern society, and the facilities presented in our country for the acquisition of wealth, the pursuit of gain predominates over our concern for the affairs of the Republic. Even Liberty is worshipped in the form of property. . . . Corrupt Congress and you assail the former in the very seat of its vitality. . . . You can no more make a freeman than you can a shoemaker, without practical instruction. . . . We are asked—Have you seen corruption? Sir, do you expect to see it? You had as well expect to see the embodied forms of pestilence and famine stalking before us. It steals upon us in a thousand invidious forms when we are least aware. Of all the forms in which it can present itself the bribery of office is the most dangerous, because it assumes the guise of patriotism.[1] . . . To an ambitious man office will appear as beautiful and fascinating as the apple of Paradise. . . . By means of his patronage the President addresses himself to the noblest of our passions. . . . No free government has been overcome by force; but all by corruption. . . . In England the family of Orange gave up the claim of prerogative, and substituted what is speciously denominated 'Influence,' which is but another word for Corruption. . . . Sir Robert Walpole said that every politician had his price. . . . There is a splendour in successful ambition that conceals the depravity by which it accomplishes its purpose. The man who steals a penknife is shunned as an object of abhorrence: the man who steals a sceptre is hailed as an object of adoration. . . . Even in the United States there are those who would rather eat the very crumbs from the trenches of executive patronage than the bread of honest independence."

Fifty years later the pestilence is still stalking. The slave-holder belongs to the past: the office-seeker and the swindler have taken his place, without his dignity, as the arch-enemies of their nation's stability at home, and are threatening to make its name a bye-word abroad. I find in a number of the sufficiently patriotic "Scribner" for

[1] Our readers will perceive how exactly this anticipates the first successful and second futile defence of his roguery by Senator "Silas P. Radcliffe."

1877: "The head of Christendom is orthodox enough. . . . It is the heart, the character, the life that are heterodox, and until these are reached our epidemic will continue and settle down into a national disease, like the goitre in Switzerland and leprosy in Arabia." It is no answer to this charge, urged, be it observed, with most vehemence by the better class of Americans themselves, against the worst; it is no answer to say that the private memoirs of the courts of France and England in the eighteenth century reveal a seething mass of selfish coalitions and profligate cabals, and that for one purely patriotic combination universal history shows ten where personal motives are manifest; or to say that the revelations of the City of Glasgow Bank were more infamous than those of the Erie Railway. The complaint remains that in America those misdemeanours pass with slight reprobation, save from a few satirists, who raise a laugh, and moralists who are accused of being supersensitive. Consequently the criminals escape: Mr. Potter was imprisoned, Mr. Fiske went at large. In no other country is political turpitude so brazen; in no other are the local judges elected for short dates by popular assemblies; nor elsewhere is the aversion to dignitaries for life—the idea that new men must grapple with new duties—put forward as a pretext for yearly shunting one set of plunderers to make room for another. "Removals," says Mrs. Baker, in *Democracy*, "were fast and furious, till all Indiana became easy in circumstances." The author or authoress of this scathing work may be a Copperhead (Carrington, the only creditable male American it contains is a Southerner), and its success may be due as much to the pleasure we are said to derive from the misfortunes of our friends, as to its cleverness. The mystery or disgrace remains that the representation of Silas P. Radcliffe as a likely candidate for the highest office of the State seems, in America itself, to have excited no audible burst of indignation. "The bitterest part of all this horrid story," says Mrs. Lee—in her postscript with the sting—"is that nine out of ten of our countrymen would say I had made a mistake," *i.e.*, in declining to unite her fortunes for life with those of an able but boorish mercenary scamp. I have quoted J. P. Nichol's apology for the roughness of the pioneers; but of this other type of Western manners and morals, the worst product of a commercial Plutocracy, he elsewhere writes:—"I know[1] not a more disagreeable person—one with whom, in reference to social problems, I should less like to come into contact—than an American Democrat of the present day, belonging to what the French would call the party of the extreme *Left*. Without the polish of an aristocrat of our own European schools, he has every atom of his pride, his dogmatism, his determination that, come what may, no man shall prevent him from doing what he wills with his own. Deeming, according to a phrase I have heard, that he could

[1] This quotation belongs to a later date, when the writer's views both as to our own and foreign politics leant more to the side of Hamilton, and less to that of Jefferson, than formerly.

show his independence best by the declaration that to no man on earth would *he* touch his hat, he is nevertheless so hopelessly intolerant as to deem it a crime or a scorn to respect the feelings or even the consciences of others. Rising into high places, we sometimes can trace this lowest Democracy as an influence over the councils of the Government. The thoughts of the private ultra-democrat centre, as I have said, in himself; in the thoughts of the political ultra-democrat no nation's rights have a place unless they avow obedience to the principles overshadowed by the "stars and stripes." Spain, Mexico—what rights have States like these? Great Britain is to him an abhorrence, for although we are not a Republic, our power is unquestionable and our people free. Russia is better, for the Czar is an Autocrat after the Democrat's heart, and beneath that throne there is a level as dead as the steppes of Siberia. I have known men of this stamp at one moment vapouring about the oppression of the European peoples, and prepared at the next to denounce you as an incendiary should a blush mantle your forehead at the sight of an accomplished Quadroon lady exposed on the human shambles of New Orleans."

The worst feature of the twenty-five years of American history that have elapsed since the above was written, is the fact that the *ultima ratio* of rowdyism—the arm of the assassin—has twice nearly appeared to vindicate itself by the attainment of its ends. When—according to one of the most unfortunate provisions of the Constitution—Andrew Johnson succeeded Abraham Lincoln in the Presidential Chair, it was on the cards that half the hopes arising out of the war of liberation might be frustrated. Booth's successor in villainy, the more wretched Guiteau, seems to have won for the cause of Corruption at least a temporary triumph. I find the following, only the other day, in one of our leading newspapers:—

"The ascent of Mr. Arthur to the Chief Magistracy over the dead body of Mr. Garfield and his declinature or failure to enter on a career of Civil Service reform have led to a revival of hope on the part of such experts in the 'Boss system' as Mr. Roscoe Conkling and Senator Cameron. . . . It is to be hoped that there will be enough of public spirit, or rather of public interest in politics, in the United States, to achieve another defeat of this detestable political *régime*, which meant the vesting of all power and patronage in a corrupt Washington ring, whose champions openly avow their belief that 'the great moneyed men of the railroads and the manufactories and the banks need to have the Government controlled either by their own agents and partners, or by men of their own kind, who are in sympathy with them, and can exchange assistance with them, so that united they can disregard popular clamour as expressed through the newspapers.'"

The insolence of Plutocracy surely reaches a climax in this cynical challenge: if equalled, it is by the saying attributed to a self-raised oligarch nearer home—"In our Church we want a Bishop; will money do it? I shall make money the Bishop." The danger to Anglo-Saxon

civilisation is no longer anywhere in Aristocracy, but in the habit of yielding to violence that is growing upon our Demagogues, and the dominion of an exclusively Commercial Spirit which, as alien to liberty as to art, cares only for the public welfare as a means to swell the private purse. The danger culminates in America, because this new tyrannic class has fewer rivals: the possibility of making monstrous fortunes by smart strokes is a greater temptation to a more excitable race: wealth accumulates faster in families whose members have neither the culture nor the sense to spend it wisely, and the people are less protected against fraud by the sense of honour that happily lingers along with our despised "dregs of Feudalism."

NOTE D.—PRO-SLAVERY SYMPATHY.

The disastrous sympathy with the rebels in the Civil war which prevailed so widely in England has been mistakenly attributed by Mr. Lowell and others to the aristocratic—it was due more to the commercial spirit. It had its headquarters not in London; but in Liverpool and Glasgow, where the feeling was so strong that hardly one of the few educated men of the church or bar who sided with the North dared to say so, till Richmond fell and Lincoln was murdered. Then they leapt upon platforms, and cried out that they had been with the winners all along. On this question, the following letter of Mr. Ruskin is so eloquently apt that I cannot forbear to quote it:—

"SIR—I have not hastened my reply to your last letter, thinking that your space at present would be otherwise occupied; having also my own thoughts busied in various directions, such as you may fancy; yet busied chiefly in a sad wonder, which perhaps you would not fancy. I mourn for Mr. Lincoln, as man should mourn the fate of man, when it is sudden and supreme. I hate regicide as I do populicide—deeply, if frenzied; more deeply, if deliberate. But my wonder is in remembering the tone of the English people and press respecting this man during his life, and in comparing it with their sayings of him in his death. They caricatured and reviled him when his cause was poised in deadly balance—when their praise would have been grateful to him, and their help priceless. They now declare his cause to have been just, when it needs no aid; and his purposes to have been noble, when all human thoughts of them have become vanity, and will never so much as mix their murmurs in his ears with the sentence of the Tribunal which has summoned him to receive a juster praise and tenderer blame than ours."—(From the "Pall Mall Gazette," May 2, 1865.)

NOTE E.—EMERSON AND DARWIN.

The association of those names on page 273 is not intended to convey the impression that the former, in any proper sense, anticipated

the latter. The idea of a progress from lower to higher stages of animal life is prominent in the speculations of Europe from the days of Empedocles to those of Lamarck: but Darwin, in proving and reducing to scientific form what to Emerson and others had been a vague poetic guess, is as much entitled to be considered the discoverer of the law of development, as Newton of the law of gravitation; notwithstanding that Anaximander had, twenty-three centuries before him, built his system of the Universe on the cosmical forces of attraction and repulsion.

NOTE F.—PRACTICAL RELIGION.

It has been said that in America the narrowest sectarianism goes hand in hand with the freest agnosticism, that bigotry and liberality interlace each other in a wonderful and bewildering way. We have found in the works of Emerson, and in the romance of Judd an equally strange juxtaposition of mysticism and common sense. To illustrate further the shrewd practical teaching, almost quaintly minute, that in the same country may accompany the most absurd superstitions, we extract a Mormon sermon, and a comment on the religion of Utah, from the volumes of Mr. Hepworth Dixon:—

"Brothers and sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ, you have been chosen from the world by God, and sent through His grace into this valley of the mountains to help in building up His kingdom. You are faint and weary from your march. Rest, then, for the day, for a second day, should you need it; then rise up and see how you will live. Don't bother yourselves much about your religious duties; you have been chosen for this work, and God will take care of you in it. Be of good cheer. Look about this valley into which you have been called. Your first duty is to learn how to grow a cabbage, and along with this cabbage an onion, a tomato, a sweet potato; then how to feed a pig, to build a house, to plant a garden, to rear cattle, and to bake bread; in one word, your first duty is to live; the next duty—for those who, being Danes, French, Swiss, cannot speak it now—is to learn English, the language of God, the language of the Books of Mormon, the language of these latter days. These things you must do first; the rest will be added to you in proper seasons. God bless you; and the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

"On its social side, the Mormon Church may be regarded as gay, its ritual as festive. All that the older creeds have nursed in the way of gloom, austerity, bewilderment, despair, is banished from the New Jerusalem. No one fears being damned; no one troubles his soul about fates, free-will, elections, and prevenient grace. A Mormon lives in an atmosphere of trust; for in his eyes heaven lies around him in his glowing lake, in his smiling fields, in his snowy alps. To him the advent of the saints was the Second Coming, and the forming of their

Church a beginning of the reign of God. He feels no dread, he takes no trouble, on account of the future. What is will be; to-morrow like to-day, the next year like the past one—heaven a continuation of the earth, where to each man will be meted out glory and power according to the fulness of his obedience in the present life. The earth, he says, is a Paradise made for enjoyment."

NOTE G.—THE TRIUMPH OF BUFFOONERY.

I rejoice to find in the late George Eliot's *Theophrastus Such* a few pages which, under the title "Debasing the Moral Currency," are devoted to a salutary denunciation of the mountebankery that threatens to taint literature, to make "the stage" contemptible, and to destroy what remains of popular taste in England as well as in America. "The habit of dragging the ludicrous into topics where the chief interest is of a different or even opposite kind is a sign, not of endowment, but of deficiency. The art of spoiling is within reach of the dullest faculty; the coarsest clown with a hammer in his hand might chip the nose off every statue and bust in the Vatican, and stand grinning at the effect of his work. Because wit is an exquisite product of high powers, we are not therefore forced to admit the sadly confused inference of the monotonous jester that he is establishing his superiority over every less facetious person, and over every topic on which he is ignorant and insensible, by being uneasy until he has distorted it in the small cracked mirror which he carries about with him as a joking apparatus. Some high authority is needed to give many worthy and timid persons the freedom of muscular repose under the growing demand on them to laugh when they have no other reason than the peril of being taken for dullards; still more to inspire them with the courage to say that they object to the theatrical spoiling for themselves and their children of all affecting themes, all the grander deeds and aims of men, by burlesque associations adapted to the taste of rich fishmongers in the stalls and their assistants in the gallery. The English people in the present generation are falsely reputed to know Shakespeare (as by some innocent persons the Florentine mule-drivers are believed to have known the *Divina Commedia*, not perhaps excluding all the subtle discourses in the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*); but there seems a clear prospect that in the coming generation he will be known to them through burlesques, and that his plays will find a new life as pantomimes. A bottle-nosed Lear will come on with a monstrous corpulence, from which he will frantically dance himself free, during the midnight storm; Rosalind and Celia will join in a grotesque ballet with shepherds and shepherdesses; Ophelia, in fleshings and a voluminous brevity of grenadine, will dance through the mad scene, finishing with the famous 'attitude of the scissors' in the arms of Laertes."

INDEX.

ABBOTT, Jacob, 186, 370
Abolition Movement, 114, 136
Adams, C. F., 452
Adams, John, 73
Adams, J. Quincy, 106; as a critic, 183; as a humorist, 406
Adeler, Max, 423
Agassiz, L. J. R., 185
Alcott, Louisa, 369
Aldrich, T. Bailey, 251, 388
Allston, Washington, 163, 250
Alsop of Maryland, 33
America, Composite nationality of, 355
American, The, James's, 392
Americans, their views of England, 7
Ames, Fisher, 75
Anniversary odes, 247
Archibald Malmaison, J. Hawthorne's, 384
Aristocratic spirit of the South, 112
Artemus Ward (Browne), 405, 417
Arthur Mervyn, Brown's, 160
Articles of Confederation and Union, 456
Assabeth river, 323
Assassinations of Lincoln and Garfield, 464
Audubon, J. J., 185
Autocrat, Holmes's, 407

BACON, Delia, 451
Bacon, Nathaniel, 33
Ballads of the Revolution, 87
Bancroft, George, 145
Barlow, Joel, 85
Bay Psalm Book, 56
Berkeley, Sir Wm., 33
Beverley, Robert, 34
Biglow Papers, Lowell's, 221, 230, 412
Bird's *Calavar* and *The Infidel*, 180
Blithedale Romance, Hawthorne's, 345
Books, Emerson's rules for reading, 308
Bowditch, Prof., 185
Bowen, Dr., 186
Brackenridge, H. H., 85, 156
Brackenridge, H. W., 129
Bradford, William, 38
Bradstreet, Mrs. Anne, 65
Brahma, Emerson's, 301
Breitmann Ballads, Leland's, 433
Brook Farm, 444
Brooks, C. T., 186, 410
Brooks, Mrs., 252
Brooks, Preston, 141
Brown, C. Brockden, 157
Brown University, Foundation of, 49
Browne (Artemus Ward), 405, 417
Brownell's *Lyrics of the War*, 251
Bryant, Wm. Cullen, 187
Buffoonery, 420, 467
Bulkley, Peter, 55
Burlesque, 417
Burnett, Mrs. F. H., 384, 396
Burwell Papers, 33
Bush, George, 186
Bushnell, Horace, 186
Byles, Mather, 83
Byrd, William, 34

CALHOUN, J. C., 102, 115
Cameron, Miss, 369
Carey, A. and P., 252
Carlyle and Emerson, 287
Cecil Dreeme, Winthrop's, 376
Century Magazine, 452
Chance Acquaintance, Howells's, 397
Channing, W. E., as a pulpit orator, 132; as a critic, 184; remarks on Milton, 185
Charcoal Sketches, Neal's, 411
Charlesworth, Maria L., 369
Child, Dr., 186
Child, Mrs. Lydia, 180
Children's books, 369
Civil Service, Jackson's views of, 109; Corruption of, 463
Clarke, W. G., 411
Clay, Henry, 103, 114
Clemens (Mark Twain), 426
Clerical despotism in New England, 48
Climate, Effect on literature, 19
Colonial period, 29
Columbia College, Foundation of, 49
Commemorative Speeches, 126
Comte and Emerson, 305
Congress, constitution of, 456
Conquest of Mexico and Peru, Prescott's, 146
Constitution, U.S., 456
Conway, M. D., 451
Cook, Ebenezer, 34
Cooper, J. Fenimore, 175

Copyright, International, 26
Corruption, political, 461
Cotton, John, 42, 47
Courtin', The, Lowell's, 235
Cozzen's *Sparrow-Grass Papers*, 411
Criticism, 1800-50, 143; recent, 449
Critics, International, 2
Croaker Papers, 182
Cummins, Maria E., 369
Curtis, G. W., 181, 452

Daily Trials, Holmes's, 409
Dana, H. R., 162
Dana's *Two Years before the Mast*, 181
Darwinism, Emerson and, 272, 465
Davidson, L. and M., 251
Dead Christ, The, Howe's, 239
Declaration of Independence, 70
Democracy, 461
Democracy and literature, 23
Democratic party, 112
Dial Magazine, 256
Dialect in poetry, 230, 412
Diedrich Knickerbocker, Irving's, 171
Dodge, Mary A., 452
Domestic life, 20
Douglass, Wm., 52
Dr. Breen's Practice, Howells's, 399
Drake, J. Rodman, 250
Draper, J. W., 454
Drum Taps, Whitman's, 208
Dutch Republic, Motley's, 152
Dwight, Timothy, 91

EDWARDS, Jonathan, 52
Edwin Brothertoft, Winthrop's, 372
Egyptian Sketchbook, Leland's, 432
Eliot, George, on Buffoonery, 467
Eliot, John, 40
Ellice Quentin, J. Hawthorne's, 382
Elsie Venner, Holmes's, 357
Emerson, R. W., 254, 465
English Traits, Emerson's, 295, 302
Englishmen, their views of America, 7
Ethics, Emerson's, 280
Europeans, James's, 390
Evangeline, Longfellow's, 200
Everett, Edward, 129
Excursions, Thoreau's, 318

Fable for Critics, Lowell's, 228
Fair Barbarian, Burnett's, 396
Fanny Fern, 370
Fate and free will, Emerson's view, 277
Faucett, Edgar, 251, 454
Fay, Theodore S., 180
Federalists, 73
Female tyranny, 395
Fields, J. T., 452
Fiske, John, 186
Fleming, George, 397, 454
Folger, Peter, 57
Follen, Charles, 135, 182
Forest, J. W., 453
Franklin, Benjamin, 61
Free will and fate, Emerson's view, 277
Fremont's *Exploring Expedition*, 181
Freneau, Philip, 93

GALE, Hamilton (Dodge), 452
Garden, Alexander, 35
Garfield, assassination of, 464
Garrison, W. Lloyd, 139
Garth, J. Hawthorne's, 387
George Eliot on Buffoonery, 467
George Fleming, 397, 454
Georgia, Early literature of, 35
Gerstaecker, Frederick, 369
Golden Legend, Longfellow's, 201
Gookin, Daniel, 40
Gould, Hannah F., 252
Gould, J. T., 370
Government, Effect of, on literature, 23
Greeley, Horace, 156
Green, Joseph, 58
Griswold, R. W., 449

Hail Columbia, 87
Hale, E. E., 453
Halleck, Fitz-Greene, 251
Halliburton, Judge, 410
Hamilton, Alex., 68, 73
Hammond, John, 32
Hancock, John, 68
Harper's Magazine, 452
Harte, Bret, 434
Harvard Commemoration Ode, Lowell's, 224
Harvard University, Foundation of, 48
Hawthorne, Julian, 380
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, 322
Hay, John, 251
Hayne, R. Y., 108, 120
Heart of the Andes, Winthrop's criticism of, 371
Heathen Chinee, Harte's, 436
Hedge, Frederick, 186
Henry, Patrick, 68
Hiawatha, Longfellow's, 202
Higginson, Francis, 38
Higginson, T. W., 453
Hildreth, Richard, 146
Hillard, George S., 181
Hillhouse, J. A., 251
Hingston, E. P., 423
Historians, 143, 454
History and Literature, 4
Hodge, Dr., 186
Hoffman, C. Fenno, 162
Holland, J. G., 251, 453
Holmes, O. Wendell, 249; as a novelist, 357; as a humorist, 407
Home, Sweet Home, Woodworth's, 250
Hooker, Thomas, 42
Hopkinson, Francis, 85
Hopkinson, Joseph, 88
House of the Seven Gables, Hawthorne's, 340
Howe, Mrs. J. Ward, 239, 452
Howells, W. D., as a novelist, 397; as a Critic, 452

Hudson, H. N., 186
Humorists, 405
Humour and Wit, 402
Humphreys, David, 85
Hunt, Mrs., 251
Hyperion, Longfellow's, 178

IMITATION, Effect on literature, 24
Immortality, Emerson's views, 285
Impatience, National, 21
Independence, Result on American literature, 15
Indian Names, Sigourney's, 252
International copyright, 26
Irene, Lowell's, 227
Irving, Washington, 147, 170

JACKSON, Andrew
James, Henry, jun., 389, 452
Jay, John, 73
Jeff Brigg's Love Story, Harte's, 444
Jefferson, Thomas, 70, 77
Johnson, Edward, 39, 41
Josh Billings, 423
Josselyn, John, 39
Judd, Sylvester, 362

KENNEDY, J. P., 156
Kent, Chief-Justice, 186
Key, F. S., 88
King, T. Starr, 181
Kirk's *Charles the Bold*, 155
Knapp, Francis, 58
Knapps' trial, Webster's speech at, 125

LADIES, Tyranny of the, 395
Lathrop, G. Parsons, 251
Lawson, John, 34
Lee, R. H., 69
Legaré, H. Swinton, 156
Leland, C. C., 432
Lewis, E. A., 252
Liberator, William Lloyd Garrison's, 138
Libraries, Foundation of, 48
Ligeia, Poe's, 166
Lincoln, Abraham, 142
Lincoln's Burial Hymn, Whitman's, 211
Literature and History, 4
Livingston, Wm., 52
Longfellow, H. Wadsworth, 178, 193
Loomis, Prof., 185
Lowell, J. Russell, 220, 412
Luck of Roaring Camp, Harte's, 440

M'Fingal, 89
Madison, James, 79
Mann, Horace, 186
Marble Faun, Hawthorne's, 347
Margaret, Judd's, 362
Maria del Occidente (Mrs. Brooks), 252
Mark Twain, 426
Marriage law, C. B. Brown on, 159
Marsh, Dr., 186
Marshall, John, 73
Maryland, early literature of, 34
Mason, Captain John, 39
Massachusetts to Virginia, Whittier's, 241
Mather, Richard, Increase, Cotton, and Samuel, 51
Mather's *Remarkable Providences*, 41
Maud Müller, Whittier's, 243
Mayhew, John, 58
Melville, Herman, 180
Miggles, Harte's, 441
Miller, Cincinnatus (Joaquin), 214
Mississippi Pilot, Mark Twain's, 430
Mormonism, 466
Morris, G. P., 251
Motley, J. Lothrop, 150
Murray, Lindley, 78
Mysticism, Emerson's, 263
My Study Windows, Lowell's, 415

NATURE, effect on literature, 19
Nature, Emerson's, 259, 272
Nautilus, The, Holmes's, 250
Neal, John, 179
Neal, Joseph, 411
Neo-Platonism, Emerson's, 264
New England, settlement of, 36
New England's Annoyances, 56
Newspapers, Early, 49
Nichol, J. P., on democracy, 458
Northern Plutocracy, 112
Norton, Andrews, 132
Novelists, 353; recent, 449
Noyes, Nicholas, 59

OAKES, Uriah, 57
Office, Nominations to, 109; Corruptions, 461
Old Home, The, Hawthorne's, 348
Old manse, 323
Optimism, Emerson's, 274, 307
"Orations," 126
Orators, 67, 97
Orientalism, 270
Orpheus, C. Kerr, 422
Orphic Sayings, Emerson's, 257
Osgood, Mrs., 251
Othello, Adams's critique, 183
Otis, James, 68
Outcasts of Poker Flat, Bret Harte's, 441

PAINE, R. T., 88
Palfrey, J. G., 135
Parker, Theodore, 135
Parsons, T. W., 454
Patois in poetry, 230, 412
Paulding, J. K., 178
Payne, J. H., 250
Pennsylvania University, Foundation of, 49
Percival, J. Gates, 250, 451
Petroleum V. Nasby, 422
Peyster, J. Watts de, 156
Phelps, Miss E. S., 369
Phillips, Wendell, 140
Phillis, Wheatley, 86

Piatt's *Western Windows*, 251
Pierpont, J., 250
Pilgrim Fathers, 36
Pinkney, William, 129
Plutocratic spirit, 112, 464
Poe, Edgar Allan, 163; as a poet, 217; on Hawthorne, 334
Poet at the Breakfast Table, Holmes, 408
Poets of nineteenth century, 187, 220, 449
Political speeches, 67, 97
Poor Richard's Almanack, 63
Prentiss, Miss, 369,
Prescott, Wm. H., 147
Presidents, Decay of power of, 144; Election and term of Office of, 459
Press, Early institution of, 49
Preston, Mrs., 251
Princeton College, Foundation of, 49
Progress of Dulness, 88
Pro-Slavery sympathy in England, 465
Pulpit in New England, 43; influence after the Union, 131
Puritan Fathers, 36, 40, 43, 49
Puritanism, Emerson's contact with, 279

QUINCY, Josiah, 99, 144

RANDOLPH, John, 100
Read, T. Buchanan, 251
Rebellion, Southern, 141; ballads of, 238
Red Rover, Cooper's, 176
Religion, Practical, 466
Religious influences after the Union, 131
Representative Men, Emerson's, 292
Republican party, 113
Revisited, Whittier's, 243
Revolution period, 61
Ripley, G., 452
Roderick Hudson, James's, 392
Romances, 1800-50, 143
Ruskin on Lincoln, 465

Sam Slick, Haliburton's, 410
Sanderson, John, 411
Sandys, George, 32
Sargent, Epes, 250
Saturday Club, Boston, 207
Saxe, J. G., 410
Scarlet Letter, The, Hawthorne's, 335
Scribner's Magazine, 442
Sebastian Strome, J. Hawthorne's, 385
Sedgwick, Miss, 179
Sergeant, John, 129
Sewall, J. M., 85
Sewall, Samuel, 52
Shepard, Thomas, 42
Sherman, General, 156
Sigourney, Mrs., 252
Simms, W. G., 178
Slavery Question, 17, 70, 105, 136, 464
Smith, Captain John, 31
Smith, Mrs. E. O., 179
South Carolina, Early literature of, 35
Southern States, Culture of, 16; Aristocratic spirit of, 112
Spiritual Freedom, Channing on, 133
Spofford, Harriet, 252, 454
Sprague, Charles, 251
Star-spangled Banner, 88
State sovereignty, 71
Stedman, E. C., 452
Still Water Tragedy, Aldrich's, 388
Stockton, F. R., 454
Stoddard, Mrs. E., 454
Stoddard, R. H., 251, 452
Story, Judge, 156, 186
Stowe, Mrs. Beecher, 366
Strachey, William, 32
Street, A. B., 251
Sumner, Charles, 141
Swedenborg, Emerson's views of, 268

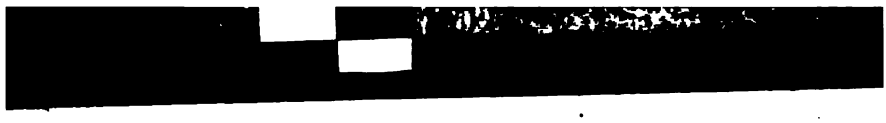
TAYLOR, Bayard, 248
Tennessee's Partner, Bret Harte's, 442
Thacker, Antony, 41
Thanatopsis, William Cullen Bryant's, 188
Thankful Blossom, Harte's, 444
Thaxter, Celia, 252
Theocracy of New England, 42
Theology after the Union, 131
Thomson, Benjamin, 57
Thoreau, Henry D., 181, 313; literary relation to Emerson, 310
Thorpe, T. B., 179
Threnody, Emerson's, 299
Ticknor, F., 251
Ticknor, George, 155
Timrod, H., 251
Tourists' limited views, 8
Tramp Abroad, Mark Twain's, 428
Transcendentalism, 254
Travel, relations of, to the present, 5
Trumbull, John, 88
Tuckerman, H. T., 181
Tyler's, Prof. Coit, *History of American Literature*, 30

Uncle Tom's Cabin, Stowe's, 367
Undiscovered Country, Howells', 400
Union, basis of the, 71
United States, Composite nationality of, 355; Constitution, 456
Universities, foundation of, 48

VAUGHAN'S *Golden Fleece*, 32
Verplanck's *Major Egerton*, 180
Very, Jones, 251
Veto, Presidential, 460
Virginia, parent of Anglo-American literature, 31

Walden, Thoreau's, 316
War, civil, 141; ballads of, 238
War of 1813, speeches on, 101
Ward, Nathaniel, 42
Ware, William, 178

Warner, C. D., 454
Warren, Joseph, 68
Warren, Mercy, 85
Washington, George, 69, 74
Wayside Inn, Longfellow's, 199
Weariness, Longfellow's, 197
Webster, Daniel, 115, 118
Webster, Noah, 78
Wells, Professor, 185
Western democracy, 112
Wetherell, Miss, 370
Wheatley, Phillis, 86
Wheaton, international lawyer, 186
Whipple, E. P., 449
Whistle, The, Franklin's, 65
White, R. G., 186
Whitman, Mrs., 251
Whitman, Walt, 207
Whitney, Miss, 369
Whitney, W. D., 186
Whittier, J. Greenleaf, 240
Wigglesworth, Michael, 58
Wilde, R. H., 156
Williams, Roger, 40, 46
Willis, N. P., 180, 251
Wilson, Henry, 156
Wilson, James, 68
Winslow's *Narrative*, 39
Winthrop's *History*, 45
Winthrop, Theodore, 370
Wirt, William, 129
Wit and humour, 402
Witch mania in New England, 45
Women, tyranny of, 395
Wood, William, 38
Woodworth's *Old Oaken Bucket*, 250
Woolman, John, 80
Worcester, lexicographer, 186

YALE College, Foundation of, 49
Yankee Doodle, 87

Printed by R. & R. CLARK, *Edinburgh*.